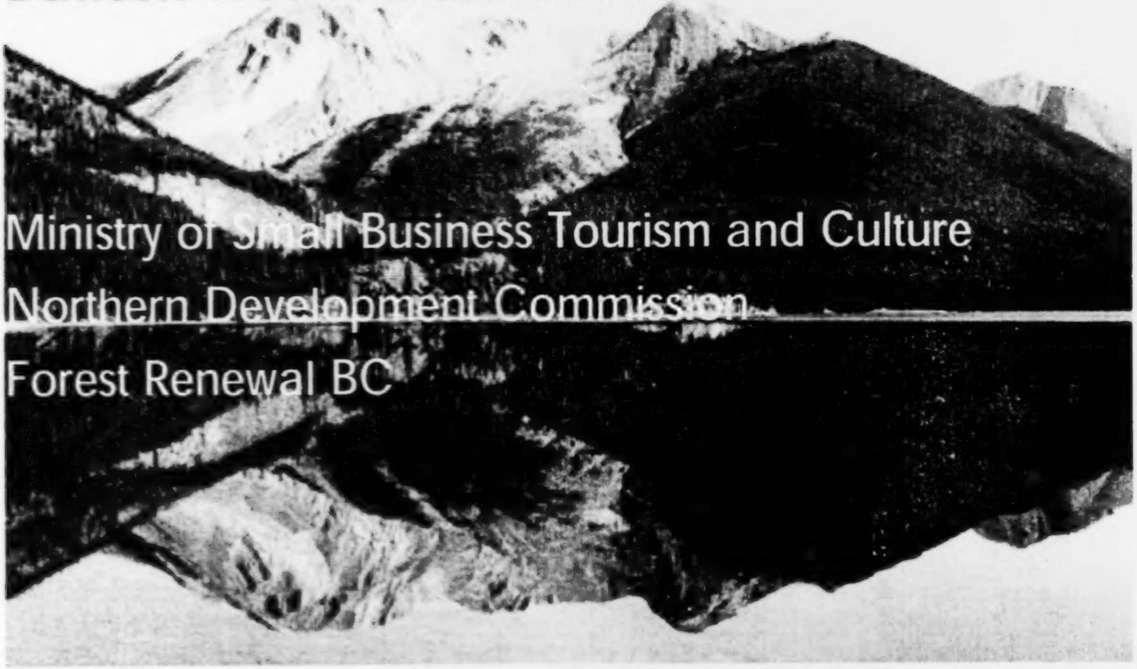
Final Report

Tourism Opportunity Study
Dawson Creek Forest District



Ministry of Small Business Tourism and Culture
Northern Development Commission
Forest Renewal BC

Prepared by:
Lions Gate Consulting Inc.
Vancouver

in association with:
Geoscape Environmental Planners
New Westminster

JK Solutions Ltd.
Fort St. John

Sunderman and Associates
Kamloops

SLK Consulting
Tumbler Ridge

March 2001

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the project sponsors, government agencies, tourism operators and recreation groups in providing information for this project. We would also like to thank the members of the Local Advisory Committee and municipalities in the region for the many hours they contributed to guide our work and keep things on track.

***Clients*:**

- Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture
  Sarah Doe
- Northern Development Commission
  Leslie Lax

Local Advisory Committee:

- Sarah Doe, MSBTC
- Leslie Lax, NDC
- Al Rodine, Ministry of Forests
- Elvin Gowman, BC Assets and Lands
- Don Roberts, BC Parks
- Andy Ackerman, BC Environment
- Bill Lindsay, District of Hudson's Hope
- Katie Moen, District of Hudson's Hope
- Tim Caton, Peace River Regional District
- Mike Sebold, Community Futures
- Wayne Dahlen, Dawson Creek Chamber
- April Moi, Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association

Consulting Team:

▪ Steve Nicol, Lions Gate Consulting Inc.	- project management
▪ Randy Sunderman, Sunderman and Associates	- community action plans
▪ Warren Fox, Geoscape Environmental Planners	- product analysis and mapping
▪ Bill Gushue, Catherine Berris Associates	- GIS analyst, maps
▪ Sue Kenny, SLK Consulting	- operator survey, interviews, data entry
▪ Jackie Kjos, JK Solutions	- data collection
▪ Dr. Charles Helm	- consultation and mapping
▪ Arthur Hadland	- consultation and mapping

Copies of the report, and the associated maps and database, are available from:

Sarah Doe
Senior Policy Analyst, Tourism Policy and Land Use Branch
Ministry of Small Business Tourism and Culture
PO Box 9800 STN PROV GOVT
5th Floor, 1405 Douglas Street
Victoria, BC V8W 9W1
250.387.6487
sarah.doe@gems5.gov.bc.ca

Table of Contents

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

2 INTRODUCTION 11

2.1 STUDY PURPOSE 11
2.2 METHODOLOGY 12
2.3 REPORT STRUCTURE 13

3 THE TOURISM INDUSTRY 14

3.1 BC TOURISM 14
3.1.1 Visitor Volumes 14
3.1.2 Expenditures 14
3.1.3 Employment 14
3.1.4 Tourism and Rural Job Creation 14
3.1.5 Tourism and Regional Economic Development 14
3.1.6 Ecotourism 15
3.1.7 The Evolving Adventure/Ecotourism Experience 16
3.1.8 Access and Opportunities 16
3.1.9 Technology 16
3.1.10 Societal Acceptance 16
3.1.11 Implications for Tourism Development in the Study Area 16
3.2 REGIONAL TOURISM PROFILE 17
3.2.1 Community Setting 17
3.2.2 Land Base 18
3.2.3 Tourism Operations 18
3.2.4 Overview of Visitor Characteristics 19
3.2.5 Visitor Origin 20
3.2.6 Primary Trip Purpose 20
3.2.7 Transportation 21
3.2.8 Spending 22
3.2.9 Visitor Info Centre Registrations 22
3.2.10 Room Revenues 23
3.2.11 Traffic Volume Trends 24
3.2.12 Park Use 24
3.3 COMMUNITY SWOT ANALYSIS 25
3.3.1 Dawson Creek 26
3.3.2 Tumbler Ridge 27
3.3.3 Chetwynd 28
3.3.4 Hudson's Hope 29

4 TOURISM PLANNING CONTEXT 31

4.1 LAND USE PLANNING AND TOURISM 31
4.2 ECOTOURISM AND ADVENTURE TRAVEL STRATEGY FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA 32
4.3 REGIONAL TOURISM PLANNING 32
4.3.1 Dawson Creek LRMP 32
4.3.2 Hudson's Hope Tourism Development Review 33
4.3.3 District of Tumbler Ridge: Diversification Study 33
4.3.4 Dawson Creek Interpretive Centre Study 33
4.3.5 Chetwynd Economic Development Study 33

5 PRODUCT OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS 34

5.1 RESOURCE UNIT DESCRIPTION 34
5.2 PRODUCT SELECTION 35
5.3 ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS 38
5.4 PRODUCT/COMMUNITY MATCH SUMMARY 40
5.5 SUITABILITY MAPPING 42

5.6 PRODUCT OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS 43
5.6.1 Lakes and Rivers (Non-motorized) 43
5.6.2 Lakes and Rivers (Motorized) 49
5.6.3 Summer Trail Products 55
5.6.4 Snowmobiling 65
5.6.5 Nordic Skiing/Ski Touring 71
5.6.6 Road Touring 78
5.6.7 Nature Observation/Heritage Interpretation 83
5.6.8 Lodge/Resort 90
5.6.9 Huts 96

6 COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN 102

6.1 ISSUES OVERVIEW 102
6.2 ISSUES SCAN 102
6.3 COMMUNITY STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS 104
6.3.1 Hudson's Hope Action Plan 104
6.3.2 Chetwynd Action Plan 109
6.3.3 Tumbler Ridge Action Plan 114
6.3.4 Dawson Creek and Area Action Plan 121
6.4 REGIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS 125

7 APPENDIX 1 – DATA COLLECTION RESULTS 129

7.1 SURVEY METHODOLOGY 129
7.1.1 Operator List 129
7.1.2 Mail Out / Fax Survey 129
7.1.3 Results 129
7.2 RESPONDENT PROFILE 130
7.3 STUDY CONTACTS 131
7.4 SURVEY RESPONDENTS 132

8 APPENDIX 2 – DAWSON CREEK TOS SURVEY 133

9 APPENDIX 3 - PRODUCT PRE-FEASIBILITY PROFILES 136

10 APPENDIX 4 - BIBLIOGRAPHY 154

MAPS

Base Map
Study Area Sub-units
Lakes and Rivers (non-motorized)
Lakes and Rivers (motorized)
Summer Trail Products
Snowmobiling
Ski Touring
Cross-Country Skiing
Road Touring
Nature Observation/Heritage Interpretation
Lodge/Resort
Huts

1 Executive Summary

Introduction

- Lions Gate Consulting Inc. has been commissioned by the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture to identify opportunities for sustainable community-based tourism development within the Dawson Creek Forest District. Working with Clover Point on the project are Geoscape Environmental Planners, Catherine Berris Associates and Sunderman and Associates. Local team members who assisted with survey and mapping included Sue Kenny (SLK Consulting), Jackie Kjos (JK Solutions), Arthur Hadland and Dr. Charles Helm. The four major communities in the study area include Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Hudson's Hope and Tumbler Ridge.

Purpose

- The purpose of this study is to prepare a Tourism Opportunity Strategy (TOS) for the Dawson Creek Forest District. This study updates tourism resource inventories, identifies key outdoor adventure products and activities, examines tourism trends and market opportunities and discusses constraints to development. The information provided by this study provides a foundation for future government, community and business planning around economically, socially and environmentally sustainable tourism opportunities in the region. The analysis is not meant to be either exclusive or exhaustive. The study's objective is to identify those high opportunity products based on a combination of natural resource, market potential and local development capability.

Methodologies

- A Local Advisory Committee (LAC) with representatives from the tourism industry, local government and community groups and provincial government agencies was formed in October, 2000 to guide project management. The LAC met four times at the Dawson Creek Forest District offices in Dawson Creek to review reports and maps and monitor progress.
- A review of available background materials, reports, statistical information, feasibility assessments, business plans, maps, data (paper and digital), and other useful information from BC Government departments, ministries and agencies, and other pertinent sources was undertaken. All existing digital data sets were imported and a working base map was developed. Several iterations of map drawing occurred prior to the final set of opportunity maps being prepared.
- The key tourism products examined in the report were selected from a long-list of activities drawn from previous Tourism Resource Inventories (TRIs) and other tourism/recreation studies. The consulting team and the LAC went through a selection process to come up with the following products/activities:

    - Canoeing/Kayaking
    - Summer Trail - trail riding
        - hiking
    - Nature Observation/Heritage Interpretation
    - Nordic Skiing
    - Boating (motorized)
    - Road touring
    - Snowmobiling
    - Lodges/resorts
    - Hut

- A survey of tourism operators in the study area was undertaken, using a survey form prepared by the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture (MSBTC). An operator list was compiled using various local, regional and provincial databases and directories. The survey was sent to 132 businesses, organizations and user groups. There were a total of 51 respondents, giving a return rate of 39%. All survey information was entered into a database using March, 2000 Resource Inventory Committee (RIC) digital data standards.

- The community action plans prepared for each of the four major communities in the forest district were based on a close review of recently prepared tourism and economic development plans, communications with other consulting teams involved in current planning exercises, and interviews and meetings held with community representatives.

Regional Tourism Profile

- A total of 132 tourism operators were identified as being based in or using the study area. Of these, 74 offered accommodations, 26 offered tours and experiences, 46 were classified as either attractions, rental service or miscellaneous service, and 6 offered scheduled transportation services or car rentals. Several operators offered both accommodation and tours or several types of touring activities. The distribution of tourism operators by community was as follows: Dawson Creek (42%), Chetwynd (22%), Tumbler Ridge (12%), Hudson's Hope (12%) and Other (12%).
- According to Tourism BC, the visitors to the Northeast are evenly split between BC residents and non-residents. The bulk of non-resident visitors are made up of regional Canadian and US travellers (i.e. Alberta, Washington, Oregon) and long-haul US travellers heading to Alaska. Long-haul Canadian, Europe and Asian markets comprise a very small share of total visitation. The typical visitor is in the region for 3 days as part of a multiple-destination holiday in BC. Their main activity is sightseeing, although almost one third of both residents and non-residents are seeking an outdoor adventure. Non-residents tend to spend more and stay longer in the area than BC residents.

Community Analysis

- The major strengths of the study area are its diverse natural attributes, a full range of experiences from the scenic alpine to prairie lands, abundant wildlife, ability to deliver on the wilderness experience and quality heritage resources. Weaknesses include distance from markets, poor road conditions, infrastructure gaps, lack of interpretative facilities and a lack of community cooperation on key product development such as circuit tours.
- Opportunities for tourism development in the study area are good. Lodges, huts, river/lake, trail products and winter products all have potential to expand. The main challenges to tourism and economic development will continue to be the lack of infrastructure, services and access to financing, both for communities and for businesses.
- The primary resource attributes of the geographic units comprising the study area is described in Table 1-1.

Product Opportunity Analysis

- ***Lakes and Rivers (non-motorized)***

  The potential for commercial activity on lakes and rivers in the study area is favourable, but not exceptional, as there is a lack of grade 3+ water that would attract enthusiasts and adventure seekers. Also the area does not boast a lakes series with connecting waterways (rivers, streams) and portages that are usually preferred over single, isolated large lakes. Lakes connected in such a manner may provide opportunities for multi-day wilderness paddling trips. This should focus attention more on the casual participant interested in the softer, short duration adventures. Kayaking, rafting and fishing will be of more interest to the existing regional and short-haul travellers to the region, more so than canoeing.

Table 1-1: Resource Units in the Dawson Creek Forest District

Unit Subunit	Primary Areas	Associated Community	Comments
Dawson Creek			
1A	Rural Dawson Creek	Dawson Creek	Gently rolling terrain of the Alberta Plateau. Extensive farming and ranching in this rich agricultural land. Recreation opportunities are linked to the highways, ranches and farms in the area. Activities include horseback riding, agri-interpretation, and two wheel driving.
1B	Kiskatinaw River	Dawson Creek	Rolling terrain of the Alberta Plateau. Primarily forested with extensive bogs and meadows. Abundance of moose and mosquitoes. Recreation features are linked to winter opportunities associated to Dawson Creek trail and Bear Mt. Activities include snowmobiling and Nordic skiing (localized).
Chetwynd - Hudsons's Hope			
2A	Hudson's Hope, Bocock Peak, Cameron Lakes, Williston Lake, Peace River	Hudson's Hope	Rolling terrain, fluvial terraces and the Northern Rockies; Williston Lake, Dinosaur Lake and Peace River compose the landscape of this sub-unit. A large number of game are associated with the mixed forest and meadows of Butler Ridge. The diversity of features increases opportunities for a variety of activities. Activities include nature observation, hiking, Nordic skiing, motorized boating, non-motorized boating, horseback riding and road tours
2B	Pine LeMoray to Chetwynd	Chetwynd	The rolling terrain of the Albertan Plateau rises to the Northern Rockies. Recreation opportunities are linked to the accessible mountains and the corresponding alpine ridges and lakes. Activities include snowmobiling, Nordic skiing, horseback riding and hiking.
2C	Peace, Moberly, East Pine	Chetwynd, Dawson Creek	The Peace and the east Pine Rivers dominate the recreation opportunities in this district. Suitable for a host of water activities the rivers likewise have a rich natural history and heritage values. Activities include motorized boating, non-motorized boating, fishing, camping, water tours, nature observation and heritage interpretation.
2D	Sukunka River, Elephant Ridge, Murray River	Chetwynd, Tumbler Ridge	The area has lakes, rolling open ridges, and rivers with emphasis on the "wilderness" values of the Murray River. Activities include motorized boating, non-motorized boating, fishing, hiking, camping, horseback riding and nature observation.
Tumbler Ridge - Kakwa			
3A	Upper Sukunka, Monkman Park, Wapiti Lake, Murray River	Tumbler Ridge	The area has subalpine rolling open ridges with scenic jagged peaks and small lakes, rivers (with focus on the Murray River) and features such as Kinuseo Falls. Access to these features is excellent. Activities include snowmobiling, Nordic skiing, hiking, packing, horseback riding, motorized boating, and non-motorized boating
3B	Bearhole Lake / Redwillow River	Tumbler Ridge	Rolling terrain of the Alberta Plateau bisected with numerous rivers and creeks with bogs and meadows. Abundance of moose and mosquitoes. Recreation features are linked to winter opportunities. Activities include snowmobiling.
3C	Red Deer / Kakwa	McBride Grande Cache	A remote area dominated by the high subalpine of the Northern Rockies. Activities include snowmobiling, backcountry skiing, hiking, packing and horseback riding.

The ability to package sport fishing, nature observation, historical interpretation with boating activities can help operators diversify, but avoidance of high use locations will be necessary to minimize conflicts with other users.

The trend toward more family participation in freshwater fishing could have benefits locally, especially among the Alaska Highway rubber-tire trade, which consists mainly of soft adventurers who would be looking for casual angling opportunities in conjunction with other lakes/rivers activities. Operators providing lessons from beginner to advanced, children and women, will attract the casual families and couples market.

The Murray River has tremendous potential for canoeing between Tumbler Ridge and Fort Sasquatch. The major limitation is the very short season.

Challenges for boating development in all areas include suitable put-in and take-out points, as well as shuttling, supplies and rental services to self-guided users.

High opportunity areas include:

- The Murray River.
- The Peace River from Hudson's Hope to Halfway River.
- East Pine River from the Murray River to the Peace River.

- ***Lakes and Rivers Motorized***

The opportunities for power boating in the region are modest but there are areas where niche development may be able to diversify the product base. The low number of boaters in the region and the lack of key attractants such as large, natural lakes and good fishing opportunities does not justify significant investments in infrastructure. Play area jet boating and power cruising on Williston Lake and the Peace River could both be developed through the targeted deployment of marinas/launches and related services. Jet boating to Kinuseo Falls along the upper Murray (Tumbler Ridge), the section identified as the Pine Canyon (Chetwynd) and the Peace River around Hudson's Hope have good opportunity for more promotion. For power cruising, there is still a need to tie any tour product together with other activities such as heritage interpretation or wildlife viewing.

Guide outfitters may be in a better position than most to take advantage of product development. With their existing investments in equipment, infrastructure and personnel, any market development during the summer high season would complement their primary autumn hunting product.

High opportunity areas include:

- Peace River from Hudson's Hope to Taylor.
- Pine Canyon.
- East Pine.
- Upper Murray from Kinuseo Falls to Tumbler Ridge.
- Middle Murray from Tumbler Ridge to Salt River.

- ***Summer Trail***

Hiking has some good potential in the region because of high quality resources, some good trails and visitor markets that place a high value on hiking activity. Among non-resident visitors to Northeast BC, hiking/backpacking is one of the most important outdoor activities among non-residents. The potential for commercial hiking tours spans a full range of options from multi-day trekking tours to short interpreted tours of the frontcountry. Many hiking participants become repeat clients, so increasing the opportunity for new experiences should increase the potential for repeat customers. Packaging with cultural, heritage and other nature-oriented activities could enhance the product.

Trail riding and packing has some good potential in the region particularly in the southern areas (where Prince George operators have developed product in the Kakwa Recreation Area). Although the trail features and viewing capability are not that good around Dawson Creek, more linkages between agricultural and tourism could be built around a trail product. The development of a multi-use trail network could involve the shared use of working animals to defray the costs of operation. This may not involve Crown land access given the large tracts of private land and ALR in the area.

While trail development and interpretation is important, building a better trail product in the Dawson Creek Forest District will also require effective marketing and promotion to attract highway travellers. The production and distribution of self-guiding aides, including trail books, books, maps and web sites could increase participation levels.

Trail riding and hiking in more remote and high elevation locales could be augmented by hut development, which would allow for multi-day tours, and linkages with higher quality amenities (e.g. accommodation). This product would appeal to the hiking enthusiast market. There is a growing market, especially in the US, for wilderness camping.

High opportunity areas include:

- Butler / Aylard Ridges.
- Mt Bickford.
- Mt LeMoray Area.
- Howling Wolves Peak.
- Gwillim Lake.
- Bullmoose Mt.
- Mt Spieker Area.
- Reesor Ridge Area.
- Trails in the vicinity of Tumbler Ridge.
- Babcock / Core Area.
- Quintette Mt.
- Albright Ridge Area.
- Shark's Fin Area.
- Monkman Lake Trail.
- Wapiti / Onion Area.
- Warner Trail.
- Bear Mountain.

- ***Snowmobiling***

  Snowmobile development in the region has some good potential, primarily amongst the Alberta-based regional market. However, this market is self-guided and is not a purchaser of guiding services. Communities can build on past successes by creating more infrastructure and services aimed at attracting more of the regional market in Alberta. In particular, Tumbler Ridge and Chetwynd can be made to be very attractive to Albertans with development of destination lodges.

  Snowmobiling is often seen as having significant negative affects on the backcountry in terms of conflicts with other users and the environment. Regulation and designation of areas and routes may occur in the future and limit development, but this should not be an issue in the near-term as use conflicts are low.

  Snowmobilers have expressed the need for the development of codes of conduct for all users, and the provision and enforcement of safety standards and emergency shelters for users. Initiatives being pursued by the BC Snowmobile Federation could be picked up by local stakeholders as a means of promoting better and safer snowmobile experiences in their communities.

  High opportunity areas include:
  - Little Boulder.
  - Mt West.
  - LeMoray.
  - Brazion / Hasler.
  - Howling Wolves Peak.
  - Mount Spieker / Reesor Ridge Area.
  - Babcock / Core Area / Quintette Area.

- ***Nordic Skiing***

  The ski touring product will be difficult to expand in the study area. The main area of competition is the southern Canadian Rockies (Jasper, Canmore, Banff, Golden, Revelstoke) where the product quality is recognized worldwide and heavily promoted by both the national and provincial park systems. Commercial operators there have difficulty attracting clientele because between the park system and local alpine clubs and societies, there is relatively inexpensive access to over 40 public backcountry huts. The best commercial potential will be for ski touring packaged around lodge and resort development. A ski touring product could be made more accessible through the use of motorized access (snowmobiles, cats, and helicopters).

  The cross-country ski product has more potential in the near-term because the regional market is bigger and it is a more family-oriented pursuit. There are already facilities in the communities which could be expanded and enhanced. For communities like Chetwynd, there is some potential to market Nordic skiing to downhill skiers travelling to Powder King.

  High opportunity areas include:
  - Butler / Aylard Ridges.

- Mt Bickford.
- LeMoray.
- Bullmoose Mt Area.
- Mt Spieker Area.
- Reesor Ridge.
- Monkman Lake trail.
- Wapiti / Onion Area.

- ***Road Touring***

  All two wheel drive roads in the Dawson Creek District can handle increased tourist traffic. Packaging bus and van tours with the other amenities in the region is one key to increasing opportunities in this sector. Tours which provide linkages to other activities (heritage viewing or scenic viewing) could increase usage. Loop tours linking features in the forest district with those outside the district could enhance the potential of the touring product.

  The key to unlocking the potential of this market is to develop along four key dimensions, including staging areas, attractions, services and tour corridors. Because the primary mode of transportation is RVs and cars, the key to getting travellers to explore more corridors in the region is to link together staging areas, services and attractions into themed units. Key themes include exploration (Fraser and Mackenzie), nature (wildlife, other natural features such as waterfalls), industry (dams, mines) and history/heritage (First Nations interpretation, Alaska Highway, Mile "O"). The region should promote the fact that for northbound travellers, there are no further loop or circle tour opportunities on the highway.

  High opportunity areas include:
  - Regional Loop Tour (Hudson's Hope/Chetwynd/Dawson Creek/ Fort St. John.
  - Kinuseo Falls - Dawson Creek Circle Tour.

- ***Nature Observation/Heritage Interpretation***

  The overall potential for the development of this product in the Dawson Creek District is good, primarily in the areas of heritage interpretation. Higher levels of interpretation and alternate programming will have to be undertaken to expand the appeal to already busy touring travellers. The initiative to undertake the construction of an interpretive centre in Dawson Creek is an example of the type of tourism infrastructure that is needed to increase visitation and spending by creating new products and linkages that will improve the visitor experience. Survey data indicates that educational, experiential and learning trips are a growing attractant for travellers interested in culture and history.

  The study area offers some unique opportunities in general nature tours and to a lesser extent, wildlife viewing. Wildlife viewing has potential to offer a complementary experience to other, primary products. Of more interest to travel markets are the viewing opportunities related to other natural resources in the study area, including alpine areas and parks/protected areas.

  The potential to package nature appreciation with other commercial recreation adventures is one of the best ways to develop unique products. Cooperation and participation by First Nations would be a bonus in the development of this product. Establishing productive partnerships and joint-venturing opportunities will favour success, but it will take time to build these relationships. Tourism BC has signed an accord with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC to help develop and promote aboriginal tourism in the province. The association is also developing an accreditation program to ensure quality standards amongst aboriginal tourism businesses.

High opportunity areas include:
- WAC Bennett Dam.
- Butler / Aylard Ridges.
- Peace River.
- Alaska Highway.
- Quintette Mine.
- Bullmoose Mine.

- ***Lodges***

  Lodge facilities targeted at snowmobilers has good potential in the Tumbler Ridge and Chetwynd areas. Establishing linkages with existing tourism operators who have commercial recreation tenure for complementary activities (e.g. wildlife viewing, hiking, and kayaking) will be important. By being multi-activity and multi-season, lodges should be in a better position to manage their cash flow and staff.

  Some theme development around the Rockies and parks would be a market advantage for new lodges/resorts. Currently, the area does not take advantage of the Rockies theme in its marketing programs, although this may change with new park development, particularly in the neighbouring Muskwa-Kechika plan area. The Canadian Tourism Commission has pointed out that there are only three themes in the entire country that have a strong international appeal, those being the Arctic, the Pacific Coast and the Rockies.

  High opportunity areas include:
  - Butler / Aylard Ridges.
  - Brazion / Hasler Area.
  - Howling Wolves Peak.
  - Peace River.
  - Mt Spieker Area.
  - Kinuseo Falls.
  - Dawson Creek Prairie.

- ***Huts***

  There is some potential for hut development in the study area, but the lack of development in other outdoor products and uncertainties about ownership and management will have a tempering effect. Hut development is almost always based on providing access to some outstanding outdoor recreation feature or activity for which a minimum amount of market appeal already exists. The 10th Mountain hut system in Colorado, the marine hut system in Alaska and the alpine hut system in the southern Canadian Rockies have all been successful because they have enhanced an existing product (e.g. ski touring, ocean kayaking, mountaineering). For the Dawson Creek Forest District, hut development should be considered in terms of its ability to improve some other high-potential product. There is potential for lake, river and trail huts in Tumbler Ridge, Chetwynd and Hudson's Hope. Huts can also be used to draw snowmobilers into some of the more remote areas of the district.

High opportunity areas include:
- Butler / Aylard Ridges.
- Peace River.
- LeMoray Area.
- Albright Ridge Area.
- Wapiti / Onion Area.
- Murray River.

Community Tourism Development

- ***Regional Issues***

  Several key issues were identified during the course of this project by the consulting team either through research, analysis or direct input from community stakeholders and tourism operators. These issues centre around the topics of local support for tourism, tenure access, transportation infrastructure, accommodation availability, and community collaboration.

- ***Hudson's Hope Action Plan***

  Hudson's Hope has been proactive in developing tourism opportunities recently with four key tasks currently underway locally including exploring development of Portage Mountain ski hill and a new boat launch on the Peace River. As well, the community has been working on its local trail network while two local entrepreneurs are developing lodges. Three recommended products that Hudson's Hope may wish to explore include:
  - Canoeing and kayaking on the Peace River;
  - Summer Trail Hiking in the Hudson's Hope area; and
  - Lodge or destination hut(s) in the Butler / Aylard Ridge Area.

- ***Chetwynd Action Plan***

  Chetwynd's recent tourism activities have included snowmobile marketing and trail development, and development of local walking trails. A local business is finalizing plans for a new adventure tourism operation centred out of Chetwynd. Initiatives that Chetwynd may want to consider would include:
  - Commercial snowmobiling with a focus on the Hasler Area;
  - River boating on the Pine River; and
  - Tourism communication and coordination in Chetwynd to support tourism marketing.

- ***Tumbler Ridge Action Plan***

  Tumbler Ridge has undertaken several specific tourism initiatives and continues to actively build its local tourism sector. The community is home to proactive groups that have been successful in establishing hiking and cross country ski trails locally. As well marketing and hosting of snowmobiling events has been undertaken. The community remains committed to the development and promotion of the area for tourism with several priorities currently underway locally. Four initiatives have been identified that Tumbler Ridge may want to explore including:

- Developing and Maintaining Snowmobiling Infrastructure;
- Promotion and Business Development for Snowmobiling;
- Promotion and Development Associated with Area Trails; and
- Revisit the Development of a Destination Lodge.

- ***Dawson Creek and Area Action Plan***

  Dawson Creek has been actively planning and implementing two key tourism initiatives including the investigation of an Alaska Highway Interpretative Centre and an Equestrian Multiplex. In January, the community undertook a tourism planning exercise with several tourism priorities emerging. The priorities will be acted upon by a new tourism coordinator who will soon be hired. In this report, three initiatives have been identified that Dawson Creek and area may want to explore including:

  - In partnership with neighbouring communities, explore development of a Circle Tour along Highway 29, 97, and 52;
  - Promotion of the Triangle Tour; and
  - Increasing the agri-tourism activities in the area.

- ***Regional Recommendations***

  Collaboration among key stakeholders and the communities in the region should be considered. Suggested actions include:

  - Coordinated Tourism Planning;
  - Development of Strategic Partnerships;
  - Tourism Business and Product Development;
  - Development and Maintenance of Transportation Infrastructure for Tourism; and
  - Ensuring Effective and Efficient Marketing.

2 Introduction

Lions Gate Consulting Inc. has been commissioned by the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture to identify opportunities for sustainable community-based tourism development within the Dawson Creek Forest District. Working with Clover Point on the project are Geoscape Environmental Planners, Catherine Berris Associates and Sunderman and Associates. Local team members who assisted with the operator survey and product mapping included Sue Kenny (SLK Consulting), Jackie Kjos (JK Solutions), Arthur Hadland and Charles Helm. The four major communities in the study area include Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Hudson's Hope and Tumbler Ridge.

2.1 Study Purpose

The Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture (MSBTC) has been contracting the preparation of tourism resource inventories (TRIs) with tourism capability modelling for over eight years. During that time, major strides have been made in the digital information available in the province, and planning efforts have been supported by ever-improving information. The entire province has been covered by tourism resource inventories at 1:250,000 and most of these have been updated within the past few years.

The TRIs are useful for land use planning of large regions, but more detailed information is required to assist with local area planning, both community and tourism business development. Specifically, information is needed to lay a foundation for future economically, socially and environmentally feasible tourism opportunities. This will provide support for community-led tourism development within forest recreation areas and on other Crown and private land.

The information obtained through this project will improve on existing Tourism Resource Inventory (TRI) and Forest Recreation Resource Inventory (FRRI) data and will enable government to support the efforts of individuals, municipal governments, First Nations and tourism and recreation associations to:

- Diversify local economies;
- Maintain access to recreational resources for local residents; and
- Minimize conflicts among resource users.

The required products of the study are:

- Detailed digital and hard copy maps showing existing and potential tourism and recreation use, capability and constraints;
- Identification of tourism products with the greatest opportunity; and,
- Detailed analysis and recommendations for developing tourism opportunities, including candidate areas for product/activity development.

The analysis is not meant to be either exclusive or exhaustive. Out objective is to identify those products with the best development capability based on a combination of natural resource, market potential and local suitability. The ultimate value of this project is in identifying key opportunities and actions required to assist in the priority-setting of key players in tourism planning, and providing further direction to communities, business people and organizations involved in tourism development in the region.

2.2 Methodology

The focus of the analysis is commercial outdoor recreation in the Dawson Creek Forest District, although other tourism issues are addressed where they impact the development of the outdoor product.

There were four major objectives for this project:

1. **Prepare an inventory of tourism operators, facilities, features, areas of use and infrastructure**
   - Build on existing Forest Recreation and Tourism Resource Inventory (TRI) data
   - Use existing data and previous studies where available
   - Use first hand interviews and surveys of area tourism operators
   - Identify land and resource issues with a bearing on tourism development
   - Provide summary statistics on existing tourism activities
2. **Create maps outlining the potential of the natural resource base to support defined tourism activities**
   - Identify up to 10 products/activities deemed to have the best suitability for development
   - Review the 1996 Northeast TRI product capability modelling
   - Prepare an initial set of maps by adjusting the baseline using a feature-based methodology
   - Modify product maps with input from industry and local community experts
   - Incorporate constraints where applicable and available
3. **Undertake an analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)**
   - Use latest market research plus information gathered through surveys and interviews
   - Incorporate results of inventory compilation
   - Describe tourism opportunities in 10 tourism product areas
4. **Prepare a Community Action Plan**
   - Consult with local stakeholders including elected officials, planning agencies, community groups, First Nations, tourism operators and recreational organizations
   - Incorporate local concerns, constraints and issues about tourism planning
   - Prepare action plans which communities could follow in developing their tourism economies

The work steps for this project included the following:

- Establishment of a Local Advisory Committee (LAC) to guide the study and provide an opportunity for community involvement in the TOS.
- Review of previous studies and summary of tourism opportunities.

- Detailed survey of tourism operators, recreation groups, and agencies to identify information on existing operations and tourism opportunities. A total of 132 tourism contacts were identified as based in or operating in the study area. The response rate through survey and telephone interviews was 39%.
- Personal meetings and telephone interviews with over 20 economic and tourism development representatives, community leaders and tourism operators for information on product and communities SWOTs and possible regional actions for tourism development.
- Telephone interviews with tourism operators outside of the study area for information on key success factors and best practices in product development.
- Data compilation to collect, update, refine and organize information from government agencies and tourism operators.
- Preliminary product and community analysis report to identify key tourism opportunities.
- Status report and maps summarizing process and preliminary results.
- Detailed tourism analysis identifying opportunities and related information in more detail, with specific implementation recommendations submitted as Draft Report.
- Final report and data incorporating all reports, analysis, and map folios. Digital mapping format to provincial standards.

2.3 Report Structure

There are three main sections to this report.

- Chapter 3 presents industry structure and visitor market data for the study area.
- Chapter 4 discusses the tourism land use and planning context for the region and its communities.
- Chapter 5 has resource, market and socio-economic assessments of the top-ranked outdoor recreation products in the study area.
- Chapter 6 begins with a summary of the community tourism situation and proceeds to outline possible actions for assisting the tourism development process.

The data collection methodology, survey results and study contacts are outlined **Appendix 1**. The form used to survey tourism operators in the district is shown in **Appendix 2**. Product pre-feasibility profiles are presented in **Appendix 3**. A selected bibliography appears in **Appendix 4**.

3 The Tourism Industry

3.1 BC Tourism

The tourism industry within British Columbia is a vital and vibrant component of the British Columbia economy. The following trends are meant to illustrate the opportunities in tourism, particularly the outdoor adventure/ecotourism component, and highlight the need for effective tourism planning throughout the province[1].

3.1.1 Visitor Volumes

The volume of visitors to the province continues to increase. In 1999, British Columbia hosted 22.3 million overnight visitors an increase of 2.1% from 1998. Nearly half (48%) of these visitors were British Columbia residents. Travellers from other parts of Canada accounted for 4.8 million visits (21.7%) a 1.7% increase over the previous year. Visitation from the US, Asia/Pacific and Europe have all been increasing in recent years.

3.1.2 Expenditures

Tourism revenue totalled $9.2 billion in 1999, a 4.9% increase over 1998. Positive revenue growth in 1999 was attributable to US, British Columbia, Canadian and European markets. Visitor spending among key markets varied with the length of stay and per day expenditures. British Columbia residents represent half of total visitor volume last year but only one quarter of the revenue whereas overseas visitors contributed 18% of the total revenue while representing only 7% of the volume.

3.1.3 Employment

In 1998, 112,940 people were directly employed in British Columbia's tourism industry, ranking it fifth in provincial employment and ahead of all of the goods-producing (resource-based) sectors. Tourism employment in British Columbia accounts for approximately 1-in-12 jobs in the province. Growth in tourism employment rose 31% in the ten year period from 1989 to 1998, approaching nearly double the provincial average of 19%.

3.1.4 Tourism and Rural Job Creation

Clearly, tourism is a prime growth engine for rural British Columbia because it can create new and relatively stable long-term jobs for local residents[2]. This is significant considering that most North American tourism destinations have enjoyed stable or expanding markets for several decades, at a time when primary resource industries have experienced cyclical, and too often permanent, downturns in jobs. Tourism jobs are readily accessible to local residents, as they often require a familiarity with the region. Tourism is particularly important as a generator of youth, entry-level jobs.

3.1.5 Tourism and Regional Economic Development

Tourism is important to the economic diversification and health of many rural BC communities. Tourism is the only industry with a positive net flow of funds from wealthier to poorer regions, and from urban to rural communities. Because of the nature of the tourism sector, the majority of the money spent is imported from other geographic regions, and is new to the host community. As a result studies show that tourism revenue can have high multiplier effects for local communities[3].

---

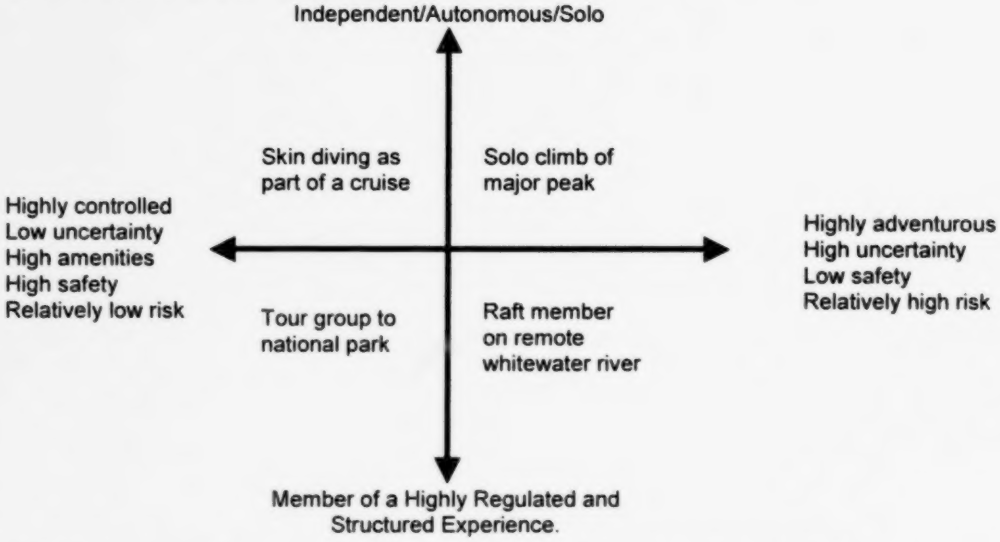
[1] Statistics in this section are sourced from the Research Services Branch of Tourism British Columbia.

[2] Cited in: Jobs and Environment — Moving British Columbia into the 21st Century, BC Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, 1999.

3.1.6 Ecotourism

Ecotourism is that component of the tourism industry that focuses on the experiencing of natural or indigenous culture in a way that minimizes impacts. Ecotourism appeals to a global market, particularly well-educated, affluent, urban residents from developed countries. BC's high quality and diverse natural scenery offer the competitive conditions for the province's expanding eco-adventure tourism sector. Tourism BC estimates the value of ecotourism to be $350 million annually[4]. Significant as this is, as important is the fact that BC rates as a top adventure tourism destination in North America[5]. Ecotourism is the fastest growing segment of the BC tourism sector. Furthermore, the opportunities for expansion of BC's ecotourism sector are substantial. This is important given that one-half of U.S. adults – or 98 million persons – took an adventure vacation within the past five years. A recent national survey of the ecotourism and adventure tourism sector in Canada concluded that "Canada's natural environment, encompassing vast unspoiled wilderness areas and spectacular scenery is ideally suited to the development of adventure travel and ecotourism and is already the basis of an internationally competitive product base."[6]

The Adventure Tourism Experience


Independent/Autonomous/Solo
Skin diving as part of a cruise
Solo climb of major peak
Highly controlled
Low uncertainty
High amenities
High safety
Relatively low risk
Highly adventurous
High uncertainty
Low safety
Relatively high risk
Tour group to national park
Raft member on remote whitewater river
Member of a Highly Regulated and Structured Experience.

Trends in Outdoor Recreation: Programs, Experiences and Issues, Alan W. Ewert, Indiana University, 2000

---

[3] Shoaf, W. "Sundance". Article for Business Coalition for Sustainable Cities, at http//www.earthpledge.org/progress/wpapers/wpsundan.html.

[4] Tourism BC.

[5] Travel Industry Association of America. January 1998. The Adventure Travel Report, 1997.

[6] The Randolph Group. January ,1997. Adventure Travel and Ecotourism in Canada: Strategic Framework for Development. A report prepared for the Canadian Tourism Commission.

3.1.7 The Evolving Adventure/Ecotourism Experience

The outdoor adventure/ecotourism market is expanding, but it is also changing in substantive ways. The outdoor adventure experience encompasses four major characteristics: (a) involvement with a natural environment, (b) elements of risk and danger, (c) uncertain outcome, and (d) influenced by the participant or circumstance. These components serve to separate adventure recreation from other forms of recreational activities. The adventure experience can also vary along a number of dimensions including type of travel, group membership, and/or amount and spectrum of risk. This variance is illustrated in the preceding figure. The adventure travel industry uses potential risk as a parameter in categorizing adventure activities into hard or soft activities. Most operators are now familiar with this terminology but have to be increasingly aware of further fracturing and the implications this will have for both product and market development.

3.1.8 Access and Opportunities

Access and opportunity is paramount to adventure recreation and since the bulk of the land base is Crown land, these are usually determined by provincial land managers. Allowable activities, acceptable practices and facilities are the three main parameters determining what activity occurs and where. Adventure activities are increasingly seen as a legitimate use of Crown lands but it has only been in the very recent past that multiple-use concepts have even been mentioned in the policy framework. The industry, and communities which rely on the related economic benefits, have to ensure that adventure tourism interests have a rightful place within the land and resource management regime.

3.1.9 Technology

In general, technological innovations, whether equipment or clothing-oriented, impact the adventure recreation experience in five ways: access/transportation, comfort, safety, communication, and information. This has enabled lesser skilled participants to participate in activities at the more extreme end of the spectrum. In the end, this will continue to increase participation and open up new opportunities for business and market development.

3.1.10 Societal Acceptance

A number of emerging trends suggest that outdoor adventure recreation is becoming much more accepted by the public than has previously been the case. Coverage by the mass media, the growth of adventure programs for therapeutic intent and the growth of training programs that incorporate adventure activities are some examples of how pervasive outdoor activities have become. This will not only increase participation, demand and business opportunities, but place tremendous pressure on land managers to actively manage for tourism values.

3.1.11 Implications for Tourism Development in the Study Area

Future tourism growth in Canada and British Columbia will be driven by interest in outdoor experiences, particularly those in the soft adventure market and ecotourism. The Dawson Creek region has many of the attributes needed to appeal to these markets but development will depend on key responses. Operators must understand the risk-reward relationship and provide the features and amenities which have the strongest appeal for local travel markets, which tend to be in the soft adventure category. They must incorporate technology and innovation so as to broaden market appeal for activities in demand, and improve their own competitiveness. They must seek greater cooperation with land managers and communities to ensure the Crown land base recognizes the demands and needs of tourism as a legitimate resource user. Communities must play a more prominent role by furnishing infrastructure and support services that underpin the industry and the employment and regional income benefits it can bring to local residents.

3.2 Regional Tourism Profile

3.2.1 Community Setting

The study area encompasses all lands and water of the Dawson Creek Forest District (FD) area, regardless of tenure, ownership or land use factors. The Dawson Creek FD area is approximately 3.6 million hectares and is bordered in the north by the Peace River; on the east by the Alberta border; and to the south and west by the continental divide along the Rocky Mountains.

- ***The Resources and Environment***[7]

The terrain in the Dawson Creek FD area is characterized by gently rolling prairie near Dawson Creek, eastern foothills near Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge, and the rugged terrain of the Rocky Mountains around Monkman Park. The Peace River drainage represents the largest river system in the region. Aside from the Peace, major river systems include the Pine, the Murray, the Kiskatinaw and the Wapiti rivers. The region retains many wilderness qualities due to its vast size, remote nature and small population.

The region is a major north-south and east-west transportation crossroads, with two major rail lines (CN and BC Rail), and four main highways (2, 29, 49, and 97 [Alaska Highway]).

- ***The Communities***

The 1999 estimated population in the Dawson Creek FD area was 29,150. This is a slight drop from the 1996 Census estimate of 29,450. Between 1996 and 1991 the area's population increased by a modest 2 percent, while the provincial population grew by 13 percent over the same period. Communities within the Dawson Creek FD area include Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, Hudson's Hope, Tumbler Ridge, Pouce Coupe, Moberly Lake, Kelly Lake, and Saulteau. The area also encompasses about a dozen small unorganized communities such as Arras, Lone Prairie, Farmington, and Rolla.

- ***First Nations***

First Nations in the Dawson Creek FD represent approximately two percent of the local population. The Treaty 8 First Nations of West Moberly and Saulteau are based in the study area along with the Kelly Lake Indian Band. The McLeod Lake Band is based near Mackenzie but it has signed a settlement agreement with the province to exercise their treaty rights throughout Treaty 8 territories. This agreement is not a part of the BC Treaty Commission (BCTC) process. The Lheidli T'enneh Band, based in Prince George, is the only band actually involved in the BCTC process with claims for land in the Dawson Creek Forest District (extreme south).

---

[7] ARA Consulting Group and Keystone Wildlife Research (April 1996), *Dawson Creek LRMP Base Case.*

- ***The Economy***

The Dawson Creek FD area's total experienced labour force grew from 15,125 to 15,935 or by five percent between 1991 and 1996. This growth was slower than that experienced at the provincial level, which experienced labour force growth of 14 percent over the same period.

The Dawson Creek FD area draws on several key sectors in order to generate its economic activity. In 1996, the public sector (education, health, and government) accounted for the largest share of income flowing into the region representing 21 percent of the region's income and 26 percent of the employment.[8] The next largest sector was mining/oil & gas with 25 percent of the region's income and 21 percent of the region's employment. Forestry was third with 14 percent of the income and 14 percent of the region's employment. This was followed by tourism, which represented 5 percent of the region's income and 14 percent of its employment. Agriculture closely followed tourism. Transfer payments such as old age security and employment insurance also accounted for 14 percent of the region's income.

3.2.2 Land Base

The Dawson Creek Forest District covers an area of approximately 3.6 million hectares with terrain ranging from rolling farm and ranch land in the eastern portion of the district, through the foothills into the rugged heights of the Rocky Mountains along the western border. The district has relatively good road access to all but the most southerly portions, with paved numbered highways serving all four major communities in the district. More than 700 km. of forest service roads and hundred of kilometres of oil and gas roads and seismic lines provide backcountry access to most regions of the district.

The capability mapping undertaken as part of the Northeast TRI (tourism resource inventory) indicated 34% of the study area to have "high tourism capability." Hunting, fishing, hiking, skiing and snowmobiling are the most popular activities, but a wide range of summer and winter activities take place. In terms of "wilderness" attributes, according to the MoF Recreation Inventory, about 3% of the Plan Area is classified as "Primitive, Non-Motorized" (>8 km from a 4-wheel drive road & >5,000 ha.) and 29% is "Semi-Primitive, Non-Motorized (>1 km from a 4-wheel drive road & >1,000 ha.).

3.2.3 Tourism Operations

The table of operators shown in Table 3-1 is based on the results of the mail and telephone survey conducted for this project. A total of 132 operators were identified. More than half of all operators are accounted for by the accommodation sector (primarily hotels, motels, RV/campgrounds and B&Bs). There is a full range of attractions, outdoor operators and transportation providers active in the study area. The totals for the four categories below sum to more than 132 as some operators offer more than one activity or service.

There are portions (quite small, in some cases) of 14 Guide-Outfitting tenures covering approximately 93% of the study area, with about half of these territories accounting for more than 100,000 ha. of territory. At present, 1.8% of the guide outfitting tenured land falls in existing parks, although the LRMP has called for an increase to 6%-7%. Guide Outfitters in the region advertise wilderness angling excursions, photo safaris, horseback expeditions, family/group wilderness vacations, and rafting trips in addition to traditional hunting opportunities.

---

[8] Garry Horne, Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations (April 1999), *The 1996 Forest District Tables – Local Area Economic Dependencies.*

Approximately 800 workers are employed in tourism, primarily in front-country occupations such as hospitality, much of which is based on serving business travellers. The back-country component is more likely to be "nature-based," and therefore is more strongly linked to Crown land management.

Table 3-1: Tourism Operators in the Dawson Creek Forest District

Accommodations		
Code	**Description**	**Total**
A01	Hotel	10
A02	Motel	16
A03	RV/Campground	18
A04	Lodge/Resort	5
A05	Camps	9
A07	Cabins/Cottages	2
A09	Bed and Breakfast	13
A11	Hostel	1
		74

Attractions		
Code	**Description**	**Total**
T01	Museum	8
T02	Arts/Culture/Heritage	8
T03	Recreation	8
T07	Nature	1
T08	Sports	2
T09	Golf - public	1
T11	Golf - semi-private	5
T12	Marina - public	1
T14	Ski Facility	3
T16	Rental	9
		46

Guides/Tour Operators		
Code	**Description**	**Total**
R01	Guide-outfitter	6
R02	River rafting	1
R05	Air tours/charters	5
R07	Kayak/Canoe	2
R10	Heli ski/hike	1
R11	Hiking/Mountaineering/ Nature	4
R14	Snowmobile	2
R17	Horse and Trail	1
R18	Ski Touring	1
R19	Other	3
		26

Transportation		
Code	**Description**	**Total**
P05	Air	2
P08	Bus	2
P19	Taxi	1
P20	Car Rental	1
		6

3.2.4 Overview of Visitor Characteristics

According to the 1997 BC Visitors Study, the Northeast region (which includes the study area) accounted for 694,000, or 3%, of the 30.6 million visitors to BC in 1996. The total share of visitor spending was only 2% of the BC total, because of lower trip spending. While visitors tended to spend less on a daily basis, they also had a longer trip length than the provincial average.

The average party size was 2.1 people, with significant percentages of solo travellers. Families represented less than 16% of all travel parties. The average age of out-of-province visitors was about 43 years, younger than the average age of BC visitors, which was 47. Eighty percent of non-resident visitation occurs in the June to September summer high season. BC visitors tend to be distributed a little more evenly, with some significant visitation in the fall for the hunting season.

Table 3-2: Summary Visitor Data for the Northeast Region, 1996

	Non-resident	Resident	Total
Total number of visitors	301,000	393,000	694,000
Percent of BC	3%	2%	2%
Total amount of expenditures (millions)	$90	$46	$136
Percent of BC	2%	2%	2%
Average length of stay	3.9	2.4	3.1
Average Per Person Per Day Expenditure ($)	$77	$50	$62
Average Per Person Per Stay Expenditure ($)	$299	$117	$192

Source: British Columbia Visitors Study: Report on Travel to BC Northeast

3.2.5 Visitor Origin

The Northeast caters to a geographic mix of visitors, predominantly from close-in markets. Approximately 70% non-resident visitors were from regional markets in Canada (Alberta and Saskatchewan) and the US (Washington, Oregon, Idaho). The US long-haul market is also very important, accounting for 21% of visitors.

Table 3-3: Northeast Region Visitor Origin, 1996

Non-Resident Visitor Origin	Overnight Visitors %	BC Resident Visitor Origin	Overnight Visitors %
Regional Canada	52	Greater Vancouver Regional District	13
Regional US	17	Vancouver Island	18
Long Haul Canada	2	North	48
Long Haul US	21	South	21
Asia/Pacific	1		
Europe	5		
Other Overseas	2		

Source: British Columbia Visitors Study: Report on Travel to BC Northeast

3.2.6 Primary Trip Purpose

The primary trip purpose was visiting friends and relatives, followed very closely by outdoors/wilderness activities. Non-residents were more likely to participate in outdoor activities than BC residents. The participation rate by Northeast visitors in outdoor activities is the highest of all the travel regions of the province.

Table 3-4: Primary Trip Purpose for Visiting the Northeast, 1996

	Non-resident Total %	BC Resident Total %
Primary Trip Purpose		
Leisure Visitors	73	90
Visiting friends and relatives	32	42
Outdoor/wilderness activities	30	28
General sightseeing	14	12
Sports events	5	3
City/town sightseeing	4	5
Stop over/passing through	6	-
Personal matters	6	2
Shopping	1	5
Other	2	1
Business Visitors	27	10

Source: British Columbia Visitors Study: Report on Travel to BC Northeast

3.2.7 Transportation

Three-quarters of non-resident visitors used motor vehicles (car/truck/van/motorcycle) to travel to the province followed by camper/RV (16%) and plane (7%). Regional Canada visitors are more likely to travel by car than non-residents. The Alberta/BC border is the major port of entry for both Canadian and non-resident visitors. The north/south border is also significant, although entry by plane is small and confined primarily to non-residents.

Table 3-5: Travel Characteristics of Northeast Visitors, 1996

	Non-resident Total %	Regional Canada Total %
Mode of Transportation to BC		
Car/small truck/van/motorcycle	75	88
Plane	7	4
Camper/RV	16	7
Motorcoach/bus	1	*
Ferry	1	1
Train	*	*
Port of Entry		
Alberta/BC border	59	76
Vancouver Airport	5	*
Other airports	4	4
Lower Mainland	3	*
North/South border	30	17

* Less than 1%.
Source: British Columbia Visitors Study: Report on Travel to BC Northeast

3.2.8 Spending

The majority of spending by visitors went to accommodation, food and transportation. Only 5% percent of non-resident visitor spending and 4% of BC resident visitor spending went toward outdoor activities. 17% of all non-resident spending went toward tour packages.

Table 3-6: Distribution of Spending by Northeast Visitors, 1996

	Overnight Visitors	
% Distribution of Total Expenditures	**Non-resident Total %**	**BC Resident Total %**
Food and beverage	25	23
Accommodations	14	13
Transportation	22	23
Souvenirs and gifts	10	7
Packaged tours purchased in BC	17	-
Outdoor activities	5	4
Attractions and cultural events	*	4
Other expenses	8	26

* Less than 1%.
Source: British Columbia Visitors Study: Report on Travel to BC Northeast

3.2.9 Visitor Info Centre Registrations

Registrations made at visitor info centres in the region provide some indication of overall visitor trends, although the interpretation of these figures have to be qualified knowing that they are not representative of the average tourist. Many travellers, especially those already familiar with the region, do not drop into the centres and therefore will be omitted from the visitor statistical profile. It is for this reason that the visitor profile drawn by the 1997 BC Visitors Study and presented in the previous section is probably the most available, accurate assessment of visitor trip characteristics. Registration figures from the visitor info centres do have value, however, in that they reflect overall visitation trends to the area. As shown in Table 3-7, there has been a consistent downward trend in visitation at the centres over the last 10 year period. Most of this decline has been experienced in Dawson Creek. While all four centres saw a decline in registrations in 2000, Tumbler Ridge and Chetwynd registrations have been maintained over the last decade, while Hudson's Hope has seen an uptrend through the late 90s. Dawson Creek, on the other hand, has seen registrations drop by 50% from their peak in 1992.

The decline in Dawson Creek registrations was expected following the surge of visitation surrounding the Alaska Highway celebrations in 1992. The extra promotion and marketing exposure this event created in North America markets had an obvious positive impact during the early 1990s, but the results appear to have been fleeting as the region has been unable to sustain these visitation levels.

Table 3-7: Combined Visitor Info Centre Visitation (Hudson's Hope, Chetwynd, Tumbler Ridge, Dawson Creek

Total Parties	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Total
2000	817	8,549	12,929	299	22,594
1999	858	8,553	14,476	549	24,436
1998	805	9,151	14,464	774	25,194
1997	754	7,848	13,716	1,080	23,398
1996	1,073	6,617	12,399	616	20,705
1995	466	7,775	12,847	489	21,577
1994	759	10,770	13,858	650	26,037
1993	781	11,938	17,377	778	30,874
1992	1,279	13,782	21,486	779	37,326
1991	1,246	10,138	18,255	885	30,524
1990	1,122	11,634	18,958	697	32,411
1989	694	10,297	23,144	1,077	35,212

Source: Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Visitors Association

3.2.10 Room Revenues

Tourism room revenues in the Northeast had a good growth spurt in 1997 and 1998 but a decline in 1999. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the 2000 summer season was no better and perhaps worse than 1999. For the 1995 to 1999 period, the Northeast and BC both experienced growth across all revenue categories, with the highest growth in hotels and vacation rentals. The exception to the growth pattern has been Dawson Creek, where room revenues have remained essentially static over the last five years.

Table 3-8: Northeast Room Revenues, 1995-1999

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999		
	Revenue ($,000)	Revenue ($,000)	Revenue ($,000)	Revenue ($,000)	Revenue ($,000)	Proper-ties	Rooms
BC Totals	999,453	1,093,487	1,157,582	1,206,097	1,328,932	2,293	81,982
Northeast	19,202	19,907	24,105	26,078	23,076	81	2,817
Hotels	10,099	9,525	10,342	12,271	11,526	21	1,292
76+	4,934	4,885	6,200	6,542	5,023	6	638
1-75	5,166	4,640	4,142	5,728	6,503	15	654
Motels	5,684	5,682	6,768	6,660	6,123	5231	827
Vacation Rentals	2,514	2,693	4,499	4,499	3,994	18	423
Dawson Creek	3,391	2,428	3,243	3,339	3,452	15	567
Motels	2,181	1,566	1,905	1,760	1,861	7	249

Source: BC Stats

3.2.11 Traffic Volume Trends

The highway system is a critical transportation service for the region and represents the lifeblood of much of its economic activity. Highways 97, 29 and 2 handle most of the visitor traffic across the region. The following table provides average summer daily traffic (SADT) for five count stations, three on Highway 29 and two on Highway 97. Given that there has not been large population increases during this time, it is reasonable to conclude that a good portion of activity change can be attributable to visitors. Based on the available data, Chetwynd and Hudson's Hope have seen strong annual increases in traffic, while Tumbler Ridge has experienced a decline in traffic. Dawson Creek has seen only a modest up-tick in traffic. There is a count station on Highway 2 at the Alberta border that might provide some indication of BC-bound traffic from Alberta, but unfortunately there are only three years of available data, not enough to indicate any long-term trends.

Table 3-9: Summer Average Daily Traffic (SADT), Highway 29 and 97, 1989-1998

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	Avg. Yr. Growth
Tumbler Ridge Hwy 29											
At Dickenbusch Creek bridge, south of Chetwynd	860	980	900	700	750	n/a	750	n/a	n/a	550	-4.0%
Chetwynd Hwy 29											
7.7 km North of Hwy 97, Chetwynd	1100	1300	1400	1600	1400	n/a	1550	1500	n/a	1575	3.3%
Hudson's Hope Hwy 29											
1.4 km north of the post office, Hudson's Hope	870	1100	n/a	n/a	1000	n/a	800	950	n/a	1050	1.7%
Chetwynd Hwy 97											
1.0 km south of Hwy 29, Chetwynd	3200	n/a	3200	3700	3800	n/a	3750	3700	n/a	4850	3.5%
Dawson Creek Hwy 97											
0.7 km south of Hwy2 (Alaska Ave.) Dawson Creek	3400	3300	n/a	3400	3200	n/a	3450	3500	n/a	3500	1.0%

Source: Ministry of Transportation and Highways

3.2.12 Park Use

Within the Dawson Creek Forest District are nine provincial parks.

- Kiskatinaw – 28 km. north of Dawson Creek
- Swan Lake – 35 km. south of Dawson Creek
- One Island Lake – 60 km. south of Dawson Creek
- Sudetan – 32 km south of Dawson Creek
- Moberly Lake – 25 km. northwest of Chetwynd
- Gwillim Lake – 56 km. southeast of Chetwynd
- Monkman Provincial Park – 60 km. south of Tumbler Ridge
- East Pine – 30 km. east of Chetwynd
- Dunlevy – 25 km. west of Hudson's Hope

Trend data for day use and camping use in study area parks is shown in Table 3-10. Over the long term, there has been some increase in camping use but a more pronounced increase in day use. Over the last decade both camping and day use has fluctuated. Some of this fluctuation can be explained by weather conditions, which tends to affect camping activity in particular. Peak camping visitation in 1991 may also have been influenced by the lead up to the Alaska Highway anniversary celebrations.

Table 3-10: Provincial Park Camping and Day Use

Camping	**1985**	**1988**	**1991**	**1994**	**1997**	**2000**
Kiskatinaw	675	807	1,048	792	1,150	1,098
Swan Lake	770	1,967	2,571	2,496	2,776	2,227
One Island Lake	888	801	1,018	811	738	815
Sudetan	143	371	452	195	308	282
Moberly Lake	3,457	3,694	4,298	4,038	3,522	3,342
Gwillim Lake	1,531	1,678	1,889	1,813	1,787	1,497
Monkman				697	294	317
East Pine	221	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Day Use	**1985**	**1988**	**1991**	**1994**	**1997**	**2000**
Kiskatinaw	1,842	4,675	6,227	3,289	3,878	5,043
Swan Lake	5,180	19,254	9,711	12,279	7,597	9,887
One Island Lake	n/a	4,675	4,075	3,716	2,920	3,309
Sudetan	1,511	4,472	4,356	2,485	3,410	3,572
Moberly Lake	4,256	8,538	8,082	14,334	6,804	9,502
Gwillim Lake	2,536	3,953	3,511	4,415	3,757	2,120
Monkman	n/a	n/a	n/a	2,800	5,216	6,171
East Pine	n/a	3,995	5,532	5,155	2,299	n/a

Source: BC Parks

Within the Dawson Creek Forest District are 18 recreation sites ranging from recreation-vehicle accessible sites to walk-in tent sites. The forest district also maintains 11 recreation trails encompassing 40 kilometres of hiking trails and in excess of 400 kilometres of snowmobile trails which are cared for in conjunction with local snowmobile clubs. The district maintains interpretive community forests near Chetwynd and Dawson Creek.

Under the Dawson Creek LRMP, sixteen new protected areas have been created, protecting more than 180,000 hectares. Since management plans have yet to be prepared, it is unclear what role tourism could or would play, if any, in these new areas. The LRMP makes clear that key areas such as Pine LeMoray and Elephant Ridge have been protected for their wildlife values, while the Klin-se-za (Twin Sisters) will exclude any tourism activity because it is a significant spiritual and traditional use area to First Nations. Other protected area such as Peace River/Boudreau and Wapiti Lake have excellent tourism potential.

3.3 Community SWOT Analysis

The following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis was undertaken for all four communities in the Dawson Creek FD. Its purpose is to identify ***strategically*** relevant issues that are driving backcountry tourism in the study area. What is of most interest to this project is an understanding of the resources, assets and capacity that communities have for expanding their backcountry tourism sectors, the barriers, gaps and challenges that are expected to impede development, and the opportunities that appear most viable, given the above-identified constraints.

Inevitably, a discussion of backcountry tourism touches upon more general tourism issues. The availability of support services, basic infrastructure (e.g. roads, highways and access), tourism infrastructure (e.g. accommodation, food and beverage services, visitor information services) and skilled workforce are factors which affect development in the backcountry as much as they do the frontcountry. As a result, identified opportunities can be directly related to backcountry tourism products, or they may be oriented toward building a better infrastructure and support network the industry needs to thrive.

The analysis that follows is based on a review of the available literature and our own understanding of backcountry tourism in the study area. The opportunities discussed are general in nature and are an attempt to draw light to broad market and product influences.

3.3.1 Dawson Creek

The City of Dawson Creek has cultivated a strong tourism industry, focusing primarily on the seasonal visitors travelling to and from Alaska. Ideally located at the confluence of the Alberta and BC highways system, most travellers to Alaska chose to travel through Dawson Creek on at least one leg of their journey. The city has done an excellent job of marketing their location at "Mile O" of the world famous Alaska Highway. Attractions like the Mile O Post, stone cairn marker, Northern Alberta Railway Station, Walter Wright Pioneer Village and the tourist information booth further establish Dawson Creek as the true beginning of the Alaska Highway and a required stop on most travellers' itineraries.

The surrounding area of Dawson Creek has an abundance of outdoor recreation activities - camping, canoeing, boating, fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing and a community forest at Bear Mountain. Recreational amenities include the Bear Mountain Ski Hill, a beginner to intermediate hill in operation since 1959. The Bear Mountain Nordic Ski Club has over 20 kilometres of groomed cross country ski trails.

According to Dawson Creek administrators, the city has the potential to become one of the finest tourist areas in British Columbia. The city has an aggressive tourism development team that is working on ways to increase tourism dollars. A new interpretive centre is planned for the community. Agri-tourism has been virtually untouched, but could potentially generate significant returns. The fact that Dawson Creek is well-serviced in terms of key infrastructure (e.g. accommodation, food service, transportation) and has a pool of available labour should favour further tourism product development. The travel distance to major recreational features in the Rockies and the perception of the community as a farming community will be a challenge for tourism operators.

Table 3-11: Dawson Creek SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Challenges
• Proximity to Alberta travel markets • Accessible by road, rail, air • Terminus of the Alaska Highway • Airport with commercially scheduled flights • Core of visitor attractions • Regional retail/service centre • Available CR tenure in most products • Ski trail network • Skilled labour pool (guides, outfitters)	• Over-reliance on Alaska Highway traffic • Lack of a developed adventure tourism product • Lack of coordinated focus for tourism businesses • Community attitudes towards tourism • Uncoordinated tourism information • Shortage of quality accommodation and variety (e.g. lodges and resorts) • Expensive airfares	• Linkages between outdoor rec and heritage development and interpretation • Marketing cooperation with other south Peace communities for circle tour products • Staging area for travel markets arriving from Alberta • Agri-tourism • Interpretive centre	• Perception as a hunting area but not an outdoor rec area • Distance to some key recreational features may limit local entrepreneurs • Perception that the recreation resource does not contribute to the economy • Perception as a farming community • Perception as a one-night-stay location • The booming oil and gas sector has provided much-needed business to the local accommodation sector. Ensuring tourists have access to these beds will be a challenge

3.3.2 Tumbler Ridge

Tumbler Ridge is just in the infancy stages of developing a tourism industry, as the community is only twenty years old. There are presently two official tour operators in the area. Both on a part-time basis. One person operates riverboat tours on the Murray River (bringing visitors to the base of Kinuseo Falls), while the other operator offers snowmobile tours. There are several kilometres of marked trails in the Babcock Mountain and Thunder Mountain Area. There is also a connecting trail to the Dawson Creek Snowmobile trail system.

Special attractions are Kinuseo Falls, Monkman Provincial Park and Gwillim Provincial Park. Main events are Grizzly Valley Days Festival, Emperors Challenge Half Marathon on Roman Mountain (85 participants this year) and Windy Ridge Hillclimb (BC Snowmobile Federation [BCSF] sanctioned event attended by over 400 people this year). Tumbler Ridge also has a nine hole golf course.

Residents of Tumbler Ridge have not explored tourism seriously due to the fact that they worked full time at the mines. The closure of Quintette Mine has inspired many people to look at tourism businesses such as bird watching, backcountry hiking, snowmobile rentals, cross-country ski tours & rentals, and canoeing.

Tumbler Ridge has many features that have only been enjoyed by a few, including caving, mountain climbing, rock climbing, back country skiing, and exploring water falls. There is easy access to beautiful rivers and lakes, including the Wolverine and Murray rivers and Gwillim and Moose lakes.

Table 3-12: Tumbler Ridge SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Challenges
• Proximity to parks and protected areas with high recreational values • Well developed trail system that supports a number of recreational activities. • Scenery, wildlife • Terrain capability for adventure sports • Accessible backcountry • Available CR tenure in most products • High resident participation rate in outdoor activities • Good implementation capacity for tourism development • Community commitment to tourism as an economic development goal	• Lack of an attraction base • Limited accommodation • Under-developed transportation access • Poor awareness of the region and its attributes • Lack of operator skills in business, marketing, hospitality • Known as a mining town	• Gateway development to Monkman, Wapiti and other parks/protected areas • Wildlife viewing, especially birds and large mammals. • Backcountry lodges • Product development that takes advantage of significant features including: - wildlife – waterfalls – lakes/rivers – alpine areas – archaeological sites – karst/cave • Attraction development related to mining operations • Product packaging to increase exposure to existing products • Theme development (e.g. "waterfall capital")	• Resolving resource use conflicts, especially mechanized and non-mechanized forms • Attracting traffic off Highway 97 • Encouraging investment and entrepreneurial activity in the face of mine closure • Commercial backcountry policy

3.3.3 Chetwynd

Chetwynd is located on the route to the Alaska Highway and therefore experiences a lot of RV traffic. The community offers numerous camping facilities and hotel accommodations. Moberly Lake Provincial Park and East Pine Provincial Park are a short drive from the town centre. The Sukunka River & Sukunka Falls Provincial Park offer great fishing, hunting and camping. There is close access to alpine snowmobiling at Hasler Flats. Downhill skiing is an hour's drive away at the Powder King Ski Hill. Hiking trails are located throughout the community and its perimeters, but there are minimal cross country ski trails.

There is one business at Fort Sasquatch located on the Pine River which offers cabins rentals & canoeing down the Pine River. One and two day trips are offered. This business offers both food and accommodations.

ATV and dirtbike touring in the backcountry is popular with locals. There are Industry Tours of the Canfor sawmill if booked in advance. The Main event is the Chet Fest held every July. There are two nine hole golf course located outside of Chetwynd.

There are some good opportunities for expansion of the outdoor recreation product in Chetwynd, including snowmobiling, fishing and nature observation. But there are also many challenges, including a lack of tourism infrastructure and interest in further tourism development. An immediate short-term objective of the community is overcoming the negative publicity generated by the pipeline spill.

Table 3-13: Chetwynd SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Challenges
• First major community north of Prince George for highway travellers • Access to major regional rivers • Variety of wildlife, including big game • Scenery • Relatively undeveloped and uncrowded • Good hiking trail network • Good partnership between community and NLC	• Only enough amenities to keep summer tourists for a short stay • Lack of variety of tourist activities • Lack of any destination status • Distance from major markets • Resident attitude not favourable to tourism • Limited accommodation • Under-developed transportation access • Poor awareness of the region and its attributes	• Available capacity for more outdoor recreation commercial operators • Snowmobile – touring product into major nearby alpine areas – trails nearer to town • Sukunka river opportunities (camping, fishing) • Opportunity to build secondary activities into existing products: - hang-gliding - fossil hunting - nature observation (falls)	• Known as a mill town • Attracting traffic off Highway 97 • Gaining community commitment for tourism development • Overcoming negative press from pipeline spill

3.3.4 Hudson's Hope

Hudson's Hope is considered the Playground of the Peace because of its many attractions, both natural and man made. There are two major hydroelectric dams near the community, including the WAC Bennett Dam, which when completed in 1967 was the largest landfill dam in the world. Williston Lake remains one of the largest man-made lakes in North America. Museums at Hudson's Hope and the dam sites attract travellers from across the region. Hudson's Hope is the third oldest community in British Columbia and can trace its roots to the passage of Sir Alexander Mackenzie through this area on his way to the Pacific in 1793. The area is very rich with geological and palaeontological formations. Fossil hunting along the banks of the Peace River and shores of Williston Lake is a very popular activity. The Hudson's Hope Museum contains the finest dinosaur fossil and footprint collection in the Peace River area as well as displaying many local artifacts from the early trapping, fur trading and coal mining industries.

The area has abundant hunting and fishing opportunities for outdoorsmen. There are several kilometres of hiking and cross country ski trails and numerous recreational facilities. The District maintains four campgrounds within the boundaries of the district which are open to the public from May to September. At time of writing, a new boat launch for residents and tourists on the Peace River is being constructed. The lack of infrastructure, uncertainty around land use planning and management (e.g. Dunlevy) and the shaky support residents are giving to tourism are some of the challenges the community will have to address. But the opportunities are extensive as linkages between existing development attractions like WAC Bennett dam and outdoor recreation products could be forged. Although there is a museum in town, the community has a large inventory of artifacts that could support a much larger display. Although outside the study area, the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area could in the future hold some potential for Hudson's Hope as a staging area for regional outdoor adventure activities.

Implementation of the Dawson Creek LRMP is focused on the Dunlevy Creek Special Management Zone, near Hudson's Hope, where there is a specific project is underway to develop and implement a methodology and strategies for enhanced stakeholder consultation for LRMP implementation. The community is concerned that wildlife habitat, recreation values and wilderness character of the area will be compromised by logging activity.

Table 3-14: Hudson's Hope SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Challenges
• Proximity to dams and the draw of existing tourists • Paleontology • Scenery, wildlife • Terrain capability for adventure sports • Area's natural resources supports a range of four-season outdoor recreation activities • Accessible backcountry • Williston Lake • Good local govt. support for tourism development • Available CR tenure in most products	• Lack of community awareness of opportunities • Lack of tourism entrepreneurs • Lack of zoning for recreation – conflict resolution • Conflicts amongst some user groups • Lack of infrastructure to support some outdoor activities • Lack of operator skills in business, marketing, hospitality • Lack of operating guidelines to ensure protection of sensitive resources. • Uncertainty by residents about tourism development impacts on quality of life.	• Available capacity for more outdoor recreation commercial operators • Numerous opportunities for backcountry product development, especially: - multi-day summer experiences using loop and theme tours – multi-activity packaging • Staging area potential for Muskwa-Kechika • Marketing cooperation with Fort St. John on a "Northern Rockies experience"	• Uncertain regulatory process for acquiring a commercial recreation tenure • Conflicting use of landscape between resource extraction and recreation activities • Perceived public restricted access to Crown lands, especially Dunlevy RZM • Resident and merchant attitudes toward tourism • Distance from markets • Under-developed infrastructure • Highway improvements and transportation linkages

4 Tourism Planning Context

4.1 Land Use Planning and Tourism

Historically, public involvement in tourism planning in BC has been shared by both senior and local government agencies. Senior governments have been involved primarily with issues concerning research, marketing, human resources and, to a lesser extent, capital. For the provincial government, marketing has been the primary tool for assisting tourism development in the province. Local governments and communities have worked with the tourism sector mostly through the provision of municipal services and infrastructure, although over the last 10 years there has been increasing use of economic development and tourism development planning to stimulate activity and expand the taxation base. While these collective efforts have made it easier in many ways for entrepreneurs to develop tourism opportunities in rural areas, some obvious development gaps which continue to present major challenges for community tourism development.

Some of the more significant gaps relate specifically to tourism's role in the Crown land use planning process and Crown land management regime. Historically, that role has been extremely limited, confined mostly to tenure issuance for consumptive activities such as fishing and hunting (i.e. guide outfitting). As the ownership and administration of Crown lands in Canada is mostly controlled by the provinces, provincial land managers effectively decide who uses Crown land and resources and for what purpose.[9] In BC, there is a variety of legislation governing land use, but the vast majority of activity is covered by the *Forest Act*, *Land Act*, *Mineral Tenure Act* and *Range Act*. Controlling ministries include the Ministry of Forests, Crown Lands and the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks. Tourism interests are not represented in any of the acts and none of the above ministries have tourism mandates. Multiple-use concepts have been articulated within strategic level language but not embodied in actual land management practices. The Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture has no control over Crown land use and they do not maintain any tourism bureaucracy outside of Vancouver and Victoria. The result of the above factors is an absence of tourism representation within both the land use planning process and land management practice.

Tourism development in BC is expanding at rates well beyond overall economic growth rates. An increasing part of the industry is oriented to outdoor recreation products that rely in large part on access to the Crown land and resource base. The importance of Crown land to industry development is seen in literature produced by the Council of Tourism Associations of British Columbia (COTA). At the annual BC Tourism Industry Conference held in February 2000, the industry ranked land use and marketing as the two top issues of concern for tourism in the province. Land use planning that values tourism interests, involvement of tourism interests in land use decisions, the availability of Crown land for purchase and tenure and relations between tourism and the forest industry were some of the issues considered important in COTA's most recent membership survey.[10]

---

[9] The federal government exercises some control in the areas of environmental impacts, fisheries, migratory species, navigation and shipping, and transboundary movement of resource products. The British North America Act vested the ownership of natural resources with the provinces.

[10] TREK International Inc., 2000, COTA Membership Survey Results: Land Use Issues October/November 2000, Council of Tourism Associations of BC.

Some progress has been made in recent years to improve tourism representation in the land use decision-making process. The Land and Resource Management Planning (LRMP) process has at least created a forum for discussing multiple use and sustainability concepts and tourism's possible role. The Tourism Opportunity Strategy (TOS) represents another step in creating a more inclusive land use regime because it profiles the current status of local tourism development, provides detailed information required for sub-regional or community level planning, and can be used to identify, develop and promote appropriate, sustainable tourism development opportunities.

4.2 Ecotourism and Adventure Travel Strategy for British Columbia

Ecotourism and adventure travel is one of the fastest growing sectors of BC's tourism industry. An expanding market of knowledgeable travellers is looking for spectacular settings and challenging activities. This strategy lays out a role for the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, and the provincial Government generally, in fostering growth in the ecotourism and adventure travel sector while ensuring benefit to communities and resources that the industry depends on. Canada still accounts for only a fraction of the North American ecotourism and adventure travel market. Despite the recent growth in ecotourism and adventure travel in British Columbia, there is considerable room for growth of the industry.

Entrepreneurs and communities play a leading role in expanding the ecotourism and adventure travel industry. Government, however, has a unique and important role in fostering this growth. This role includes: strategic investments to create new opportunities; promotion of high standards of quality practice; and establishment of regulatory and tax regimes that maintain the vigor of the industry.

Ecotourism and adventure travel can make a positive contribution to community economic development and diversification. But care needs to be taken that growth in this sector does not harm host communities or the resource base.

The ecotourism and adventure travel industry is dynamic and innovative; products evolve continuously in response to a demanding and competitive market. This situation challenges Government to develop regulations that protect sensitive resources without unnecessarily impeding the industry. Wherever possible, regulation and resource protection should be developed and implemented cooperatively by industry, Government, and host communities. Industry-led codes of practice, community involvement, and local recreation planning can help to maximize benefits to each sector.

Ecotourism and adventure travel products are closely linked to other tourism sectors. This sector addresses the core of British Columbia's "Super, Natural" image. Many of the images and stories that promote tourism in British Columbia refer to ecotourism and suggest that visitors who do not participate in ecotourism and adventure travel often vicariously share these experiences.

4.3 Regional Tourism Planning

4.3.1 Dawson Creek LRMP

The Dawson Creek LRMP sets out broad regional management objectives and strategies as well as geographically specific land and resource management objectives for the forest district. However, tourism objectives tend to vague and under-served in the plan language. The plan considers recreation and tourism as a single use category, the result being that objectives and strategies are almost entirely recreation-oriented. There is little mention made of tourism values, although the recommended policy directions suggest that tourism be conducted for "the greatest benefit of the community." Objectives seek primarily to "provide for quality public and commercial recreational opportunities and values", while strategies most commonly call for preserving a range of recreation opportunities towards the semi-primitive end of the recreation opportunity spectrum in most zones.

The 16 new protected areas covering more than 180,000 hectares may generate some tourism benefits but until there is a sufficient period of implementation the impacts will remain unknown. There will be competing use interests in many protected areas, including the Pine-Le Moray Area (caribou and moose habitat) and the Klin-se-za mountain Area (First Nations) but even these could indirectly generate better tourism values (e.g. higher wildlife populations could encourage more viewing opportunities).

4.3.2 Hudson's Hope Tourism Development Review

The District of Hudson's Hope has recently completed a community tourism strategy prompted in part by concerns about access and use of resources in the Dunlevy Creek 6B Special RMZ of the Dawson Creek LRMP. The study outlines opportunities in the eco-tourism, guide and outfitting and soft adventure markets with the intent of supporting an expanded tourism industry. The District is concerned about Crown land and resource management and, in addition to minimizing conflicts among the many competing users, wants to ensure access to tourism/recreational resources that will have economic benefits for the community.

4.3.3 District of Tumbler Ridge: Diversification Study

The 22 member Diversification Task Force put together to deal with the Quintette mine closure commissioned a diversification study this past summer. A range of economic sectors were assessed, with many of the best opportunities in tourism, including expansion of the adventure and backcountry sector.

4.3.4 Dawson Creek Interpretive Centre Study

An Alaska Highway Interpretive Centre business plan has recently been completed for the Dawson Creek & District Chamber of Commerce. Funding-raising has been progressing quickly, and when the facility is built, it will represent a significant addition to the local tourism industry. One of the area's weaknesses is the lack of tourist attractions and an interpretive centre would not only draw more rubber-tire trade into Dawson Creek, it would allow outdoor adventure tourism operators to offer a vital secondary activity to their own clients.

4.3.5 Chetwynd Economic Development Study

The District of Chetwynd has recently completed an Economic Development Strategy. An Economic Impact Study is also being conducted to identify the negative effects of the pipeline spill. One of the strategies being worked on is to improve the image of Chetwynd with a campaign called "Come Back to Chetwynd".

5 Product Opportunity Analysis

5.1 Resource Unit Description

Table 5-1: Resource Units in the Dawson Creek Forest District

Unit Subunit	Primary Areas	Associated Community	Comments
Dawson Creek			
1A	Rural Dawson Creek	Dawson Creek	Gently rolling terrain of the Alberta Plateau. Extensive farming and ranching in this rich agricultural land. Recreation opportunities are linked to the highways, ranches and farms in the area. Activities include horseback riding, agri-interpretation, and two wheel driving.
1B	Kiskatinaw River	Dawson Creek	Rolling terrain of the Alberta Plateau. Primarily forested with extensive bogs and meadows. Abundance of moose and mosquitoes. Recreation features are linked to winter opportunities associated to Dawson Creek trail and Bear Mt. Activities include snowmobiling and Nordic skiing (localized).
Chetwynd - Hudsons's Hope			
2A	Hudson's Hope, Bocock Peak, Cameron Lakes, Williston Lake, Peace River	Hudson's Hope	Rolling terrain, fluvial terraces and the Northern Rockies; Williston Lake, Dinosaur Lake and Peace River compose the landscape of this sub-unit. A large number of game are associated with the mixed forest and meadows of Butler Ridge. The diversity of features increases opportunities for a variety of activities. Activities include nature observation, hiking, Nordic skiing, motorized boating, non-motorized boating, horseback riding and road tours
2B	Pine LeMoray to Chetwynd	Chetwynd	The rolling terrain of the Albertan Plateau rises to the Northern Rockies. Recreation opportunities are linked to the accessible mountains and the corresponding alpine ridges and lakes. Activities include snowmobiling, Nordic skiing, horseback riding and hiking.
2C	Peace, Moberly, East Pine	Chetwynd, Dawson Creek	The Peace and the east Pine Rivers dominate the recreation opportunities in this district. Suitable for a host of water activities the rivers likewise have a rich natural history and heritage values. Activities include motorized boating, non-motorized boating, fishing, camping, water tours, nature observation and heritage interpretation.
2D	Sukunka River, Elephant Ridge, Murray River	Chetwynd, Tumbler Ridge	The area has lakes, rolling open ridges, and rivers with emphasis on the "wilderness" values of the Murray River. Activities include motorized boating, non-motorized boating, fishing, hiking, camping, horseback riding and nature observation.
Tumbler Ridge - Kakwa			
3A	Upper Sukunka, Monkman Park, Wapiti Lake, Murray River	Tumbler Ridge	The area has subalpine rolling open ridges with scenic jagged peaks and small lakes, rivers (with focus on the Murray River) and features such as Kinuseo Falls. Access to these features is excellent. Activities include snowmobiling, Nordic skiing, hiking, packing, horseback riding, motorized boating, and non-motorized boating
3B	Bearhole Lake / Redwillow River	Tumbler Ridge	Rolling terrain of the Alberta Plateau bisected with numerous rivers and creeks with bogs and meadows. Abundance of moose and mosquitoes. Recreation features are linked to winter opportunities. Activities include snowmobiling.
3C	Red Deer / Kakwa	McBride Grande Cache	A remote area dominated by the high subalpine of the Northern Rockies. Activities include snowmobiling, backcountry skiing, hiking, packing and horseback riding.

5.2 Product Selection

The Terms of Reference for the Tourism Opportunity Strategy (TOS) called for the selection of key tourism products / activities to be examined and studied in greater detail. The Dawson Creek Forest District has a variety of recreation and tourism activities occurring across the study area. The study team met with the Local Advisory Committee (LAC) to come up with a long list of activities which are or could be suitable for further assessment in the TOS. The list was compiled through a review of previous studies, including the 1996 Tourism Resource Inventory, and discussions with local stakeholders. It was then presented to the LAC for further review and discussion. Through a consensus selection process of several iterations, the products were refined and defined and finally short-listed based on an informal evaluation of resource and opportunity criteria.

Table 5-2: Activities Long-List and Short-List

Long-list of Activities		Short-listed Products
Heli-skiing	2 W Driving	Non-motorized boating
Cat-skiing	4 W Driving	Motorized boating
Back country skiing	ATV	Trail activities (hiking, trail riding)
X country skiing	Jet boating	Nordic skiing
Snowmobiling	Canoeing	Huts
Dog sledding	Kayaking	Lodges
Snowshoeing	Rafting	Cultural/heritage interpretation
Downhill skiing	Trail Riding	Road touring
Ice boating	Backcountry lodge/resort	Snowmobiling
Ice climbing	Hut-to-hut	
Rock climbing	Caving/spelunking	
Hiking/backpacking	Guest dude/ranch	
Mountain biking	Nature Observation	
Bicycle touring	Flight seeing	

The opportunities and discussions are not meant to be definitive or to exclude other development options. They are based on a review of natural resource capabilities and existing product and market development of the region – which does not imply other opportunities may not exist. An entrepreneur may decide to develop a commercial recreation venture because of the availability of other key inputs such as capital or management experience, even though natural features or the existing pattern of tourism development may not appear favourable for that particular product. The influence of such factors on the development process are difficult to assess and sometimes intangible, but they should never be dismissed by communities which wish to expand their tourism potential and diversify their economic bases. Individuals interested in developing business opportunities are advised to undertake the necessary feasibility and business planning before proceeding with any investment activity.

A synopsis of the product analysis is provided in Table 5-3.

Table 5-3: Product Analysis Summary

Product Line	Product Delivery	Activities (and associated)	Complementary Product Lines	Resource Requirements Desirable Resources	Product Enhancement	Development Considerations *	Comments
Non-motorized (Freshwater)	Linear; circle; shuttle; single/multi-day; guided/unguided	**Kayaking** **Canoeing** **Rafting** **Tubing** **(camping)**	Cultural Heritage; Nature Observation; Lodge; Water Activities; Scenic viewing	River and/or lakes; range water class suitable to skill/ activities; "Play" areas; scenic areas; reliable fauna sightings; wilderness areas; fish; complimentary trails to views/features; camping locations and infrastructure	Put in/pull out sites; trails along difficult stretches; non-motorized zoning; viewscape management; interpretive information; guide books/services; shuttle services; watercraft rentals; safety provisions	River classification; environmental impacts; heritage impacts; impacts on wildlife; safety issues	The waterways within DCFD are primarily class 1 and 2 and thus are ideal for family or novice activities.
Motorized (Freshwater)	Circle; linear; localized; guided/unguided	**Motor boating** **Jet boating** **Jet ski** **Water skiing**	Cultural Heritage; Nature Observation; Lodge; Touring; Water Activities; Scenic viewing	Rivers and/or lakes; scenic areas; reliable fauna sightings; roads suitable for boat trailers; fish	Put in/pull out sites; supportive man. planning; viewscape management; support businesses (fuel, equipment sales, rental, repair)	Negative social impacts; environmental impacts; heritage impacts; use conflicts	"Extreme" forms of jet boating may adversely impact wildlife values along and on the waterways. Noise levels may affect non-motorized activities.
Trail Products	Single/multi-day; linear; circle; guided	**Hiking** **Horse transportation** **Llama transportation** **(camping)**	Hut System; Lodges; Scenic Viewing; Nature Observation; Cultural Heritage	Trails (must be able to sustain animal use); reliable fauna sightings; scenic areas; non-motorized areas; camping sites/potable water	Primitive and semi-primitive ROS; trail maintenance	Environmental impacts; tenures; use conflicts	Concerns of disease transmittal from exotic species.
Motorized (winter)	Single/multi-day; circle; guided/unguided	**Snowmobiling**	Lodge; Hut System; Scenic viewing; Guided tours	Optimum snow conditions; access; open "play" areas; variety cluster for various skill levels	Groomed access; motorized area designation; road clearing/parking	Environmental impacts; impacts on wildlife; tenures; avalanche conditions; negative social impacts; use conflicts	Trail-based in DC, climbing in other communities. Potential for multi-day tours.
Non-Motorized (winter)	Single/multi-day; shuttle; linear; circle; guided/unguided	**Backcountry skiing** **X-country skiing** **Dog-sledding** **Snow shoeing**	Lodge; Hut System; Air; Scenic viewing	Optimum snow conditions; quick access to area; optimum areas – trails and open terrain; variety of terrain for various skill levels	Access; designated non-motorized area; road clearing/parking; loop trails; groomed trails	Environmental impacts; impacts on wildlife; avalanche conditions	The activities within this product require further research and discussion on whether each can stand alone as a product.

Product Line	Product Delivery	Activities (and associated)	Complementary Product Lines	Resource Requirements Desirable Resources	Product Enhancement	Development Considerations *	Comments
Road Touring	Rough/paved road; circle tours; linkage tours; guided	**Bus tours** **Mini Bus tours** **Large SUV tours**	Other Tour Types; Lodge; Cultural Heritage Nature Observation; Scenic Viewing	Roads (good gravel or better); scenic and unique features; reliability of wildlife sightings	Viewscape management; circle opportunities; linkage with other tour types; linkage to other districts; guide media (Signs, pamphlets, tapes, books)	Impacts on wildlife; road deactivation	The District is noted for wildlife but sightings are incidental. The WAC Bennett dam and Mile 0 are key attractions. Numerous circle tours possible.
Nature/ Historical Observation	Boats; buses; hikes	**Nature Interpretation** **Scenic Viewing** **Cultural Heritage**	Other Tour Types; Lodge; Hut System;	Reliability of sightings; safe viewing areas Scenic/Unique features; trails/ platforms; interpretive services	Access; viewing platforms; interpretation; linkages to other outdoor products	No reliable big game viewing; other flora and fauna provide a base; links to historical sites outside of town centres important.	Major wildlife opportunities are further north, but good mix of heritage and nature viewing can be developed in all communities.
Lodge / Resort	River; land; shoreline; feature (hotspring); amenity (golf course)	**Activity focused: Retreat, Ranch, Spa, Cultural, Wilderness, Fish, Agri-tourism**	Water; Land- summer; Land-winter; Air; Scenic Viewing	Focus- wildlife, culture, setting, sport fish; scenic/unique features; suitable and protected location; optimum snow conditions; trails	Proximity to relevant features; scenic assurance	Tenures; environmental impacts; fish sustainability; suitable locations; social acceptability	Lodge placement expands the base from which associated products can emerge. Mountain-based lodges and agri-tourism accommodation have potential.
Hut System	Single/multi-day; lake (shuttle); river (shuttle); trail (linear or circle)	**Backcountry skiing** **Fishing** **Horse Packing** **Snowmobiling** **ATV**	Boating (small); Cultural Heritage; Nature Observation; Scenic Viewing	Scenic/unique features; suitable locations; focus- wildlife, culture, setting and sport fish; ease of travel between huts	Unobtrusive setting; critical mass development to allow for efficiency; scenic assurance; non-motorized area	Vandalism; tenures; social LAC/CC; avalanche conditions	High to low end provides opportunity to move recreationists from environmentally and culturally sensitive sites.

5.3 Activity Description and Analysis

This section describes the products/activities, provides resource and market analyses for each and identifies "high opportunity" areas for business expansion or new business creation in the Dawson Creek Forest District.

The resource analysis examines the physical features and supportive resources required to develop each activity, and discusses key linkages to other land and natural resources. The following tables provides definitions for each criteria.

Table 5-4: Product Assessment Resource Criteria

RESOURCE CRITERIA	
Uniqueness of Key Features	Identifies level of uniqueness for the target market. The implication is that the setting and key feature will attract those tourists/recreationists from those areas where the product is not available.
Supportive Resources	Rates the availability of features integral to the viability of a product, i.e. ocean kayaking generally requires freshwater and sheltered landing.
Environmental Considerations	Assesses environmental, ecological, wildlife and habitat-related issues that may affect product development.
Supportive infrastructure	Rates the current availability of infrastructures integral to the viability of the product, i.e. snowmobiling requires trails or logging roads.
Associated products	Identifies the products that enhance the opportunities of the product described.
Significance of associated products	Rates the significance of the associated products.
Access to staging areas	Analyses the accessibility of the related staging area to the markets.
Access from staging area to resources	Determines the accessibility for the product described to travel from the staging areas to the optimal resources. Enhanced access such as shuttling is not a factor.
Prime season	Prime season is the optimal season, although secondary opportunities may be related to the shoulder seasons.
Discussion	General discussion on the products as they relate to the unit.

The market and socio-economic analysis provides information on and an assessment of pertinent market, business development and community development criteria. Definitions for each criteria appear in the following table.

Table 5-5: Product Assessment Market & Socio-economic Criteria

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA		
Markets	Demand	The anticipated demand for the product based on an analysis of participation rates, travel trends inside and outside the region and forecasts of future activity
	Competition	The extent of competition from regions which offer the same or similar products/activities and which, therefore, compete for market share
	Overall potential	Overall potential for the product considering the supply and demand trends.
Impact/ Conflict	Use	Capacity, conflict and community issues for the activity. These may include problems with too many participants in one area, crowding that may affect wildlife, or conflicts between different user groups or operators.
	Community/Social	
Business Development Needs	Crown tenure	Tenure and legal issues such as permit requirements, existing tenures, volunteer agreements, and private property issues
	Infrastructure	Infrastructure requirements may include buildings for accommodation, offices, storage or maintenance. It may also include specialized equipment, transportation, guide services, or any other "built" facilities or services required to undertake the activity in question
	Capital	The level of investment needed to support the activity.
Level of community support		The extent to which the community tacitly or actively supports the product/activity.
Employment opportunities		Employment impacts generated by infrastructure or business development related to the product
Opportunities		Specific product ideas for each activity

5.4 Product/Community Match Summary

The following table provides a summary of the product opportunities identified as having the most potential in each of the study area communities. The focus of the analysis has been on opportunities that appear most viable from a business and financial perspective, as well as those that would have the greatest impacts for community economic development. Again, the lack of mention of a particular opportunity in a particular community does not mean that it does not have potential.

Table 5-6: Dawson Creek Product Summary

Dawson Creek	
Product	**Description**
Cultural Heritage	Kiskatinaw River bridge. The Alaska Highway. Settlement areas.
Canoeing/Kayaking	East Pine River and the Peace River.
Road Touring	Mile 0 of the Alaska Highway, part of the "Loop Tour". Themed tours (the "Triangle Tour")
Destination Lodge/Huts	Dude Ranches. Spas. Linkage to outdoor opportunities.
Snowmobiling	Paradise Valley, Salt Ridge and Septimus are family-oriented trails.
Nordic Skiing	Bear Mountain Ski trails.

Table 5-7: Tumbler Ridge Product Summary

Tumbler Ridge	
Product	**Description**
Canoeing/Kayaking	Canoeing, kayaking or rafting the multi-day "wilderness" of the lower Murray.
Lake/river Motorized	Jet boating to south of Kinuseo Falls and north to Salt Creek on the Murray. Jet boating the length of the Murray River.
Road Touring	Gravel road tours to destination features. Themed tours.
Destination Lodge/Huts	Destination lodge in the surrounding ridges associated with snowmobiling or ski touring in winter and hiking in summers. Hut systems associated with surrounding ridges and Murray River.
Trails	Numerous trails into the front, mid and backcountry. Accessible sub-alpine and scenic features heighten the opportunity.
Snowmobile	Babcock, Quintette, Windy Ridge, Summit Meadows, Spieker are just some of the names associated with high quality snowmobiling in the area. Easy access from town.
Nordic Skiing	Alpine and sub-alpine ridges and bowls (light to backcountry tour). Canyon skiing (light tour). Wolverine Trails (Nordic), Gwillim Lake (ungroomed Nordic).

Table 5-8: Chetwynd Product Summary

Chetwynd	
Product	**Description**
Canoeing/Kayaking	Proximity to the canoeing and drift rafting opportunities of the East Pine.
Lake/river Motorized	Proximity to the jet boating opportunities of the East Pine.
Road Touring	Part of the "Loop" tour. Part of scenic Hwy. 97 to Pine Pass. The Hasler Creek gravel road leads to the subalpine. Themed tours.
Destination Lodge/Huts	Destination lodges associated with the Hasler and other ranges west of Chetwynd. Hut potential on the top of the Murray Mountain trail.
Snowmobile	Hasler, Bickford and Pine Pass Trail are all high quality trails located a short distance from town.
Trail Product	Front-country trails of the Chetwynd Community Forest and the Baldy Trail.

Table 5-9: Hudson's Hope Product Summary

Hudson's Hope	
Product	**Description**
Cultural Heritage	Linkages to Alexander Mackenzie and WAC Bennett Dam.
Nature Observation	High potential observation of deer and elk, some Stone sheep. Fossils.
Canoeing/Kayaking	Canoeing on the Peace River.
Lake/river Motorized	Boating on the Peace River, Dinosaur Lake and Williston Lake.
Road Touring	Part of the "Loop Tour", potential for a road and Peace River boat tour loop. Themed tours.
Destination Lodge/Huts	Destination lodge or huts at Butler Ridge/Dunlevy. Hut potential at Williston Lake.
Trail Product	Butler Ridge Park and Firewall trail. Dunlevy Park.
Nordic Skiing	Butler Ridge Park (ski touring). Cameron Lake cross country ski trail.

5.5 Suitability Mapping

The intent of the suitability mapping is to identify tourism opportunities that presently exist or have potential to be developed. The methodology draws together:

- The prior capability model maps and the methodology and variables used to identify the capability; and,
- The identification by successful tourism businesses of locations favourable for a specific activity or product.

The steps undertaken in this methodology identifies as LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH all areas that exhibit the attributes suitable for supporting a recreation opportunity. These attributes include the a general biogeoclimatic overview (alpine, subalpine, forest type), presence of suitable features (glaciers, rivers, lakes, wildlife, and heritage among others), significance of the features (What is the quality of the features? Are there feature groupings? Are they unique? Are they truly significant to the opportunity being identified), biophysical (slope, aspect, steepness, amount of forest cover), and the presence of supportive resources (trails, roads, huts, lodges, put in and pull out sites, etc.).

Determining Low suitability - All areas exhibiting the general biogeoclimatic and suitable feature attributes required for an activity or product are identified as Low. In areas where a capability map has been previously developed, the areas identified as medium and high (very high) for the activities are incorporated into the Low suitability map.

Determining Medium suitability - The next step in the process is to determine the areas with suitable features and the biophysical features that heighten the importance of an area for a particular activity or product.

Determining High suitability - The next step is to determine where the most significant features and supportive resources are located.

Netting out the constraints - The next step is to determine the cultural and environmental constraints and how they relate to the areas identified. If the constraint is deemed to be significant enough (at the scale of the mapping) then an area may be reduced in significance or eliminated. This screening process simply recognizes land and resource issues that are likely to have a significant impact on tourism development.

5.6 Product Opportunity Analysis

5.6.1 Lakes and Rivers (Non-motorized)

The rivers and lakes in the region favour an array of recreation activities, including whitewater kayaking, canoeing, rafting and river and lake fishing. Canoes and kayaks are a mode of transport that allow participants to view the interface between land and water at a more leisurely pace than via motorized transport. Participants can become intimate with shorelines they could not normally reach through other modes of access. The physical setting should provide attractive scenery with few signs of human presence or modified landscapes. Kayaking is closely linked to whitewater paddling wherein the challenge of a river is paramount and found in the rapids, standing waves, chutes and drops.

Rafting is an activity that is takes place with a group of individuals and is likewise associated but not limited to the challenges of whitewater. Like canoes and kayaks it provides opportunities for access into areas that would otherwise be difficult to approach.

These activities can be undertaken as guided or unguided single or multi-day excursions. Canoeing and kayaking require a level of skill that matches the class of water that will be entered. These activities require a degree of strength and stamina. The more difficult the waters the more attractive to the younger and more fit enthusiast. Rafts if properly guided allow a wider range of skill, strength and stamina of each individual. Hotsprings and waterfalls are complementary features, while linkages include viewing, camping, hiking, swimming, beach activities, bird watching, cultural and wildlife observation and interpretation.

- ***Regional Overview***

Strengths	Numerous rivers and a mix of large and small lakes in different settings. Quality and variety of scenery. Highly accessible. Remote (fly-in lakes). Lakes with wild fish and stocked.
Weaknesses	Distance from major markets. Lack of extreme/challenging river grades. Short operating season.
Concerns	Conflicts between motorized and non-motorized uses. Increased motorized use affecting "remote" experience. Perception of impacts of forest harvesting on scenic quality.

- ***Resource Assessment***

A number of the rivers and lakes in the Dawson Creek Forest District provide exceptional non-motorized product opportunities with an emphasis on canoeing.

Principal Lakes

Lake	Resources	Recommended Activity	Unit / Comments	Suitability
WAPITI	Scenic. Hike-in. Lakes grouping. Campsites.	Non-motorized	**Tumbler Ridge- Kakwa** A string of lakes in a scenic setting. Unique and significant.	**M**
GWILLIM	Large lake. Fish Provincial Park	Non-motorized	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** large and deep with fair fishing. Strong winds.	**M**
MOBERLY / CAMERON	Large lake with 2 Prov Parks / Small lake.	Motorized / Non-Motorized	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** Good canoeing. The lake is large and deep, subject to strong winds. Fishing is fair. Cameron - excellent canoeing.	**M**
DINOSAUR	Large reservoir.	Motorized/ Non-Motorized	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** A dammed lake subject to strong winds.	**M**
WILLISTON	Very large reservoir. Good fishing.	Motorized	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** The lake is subject to very strong winds and floating debris. Camping facilities and a boat launch located in Dunlevy Creek	**L**

Principal Rivers

River	Section	Resources	Recommend Activity	Dist / Min. Time	Class river[11]/ sections	Unit / Comments	Suitability
MURRAY							
▸ The Murray River flows past Tumbler Ridge and is considered the premier river canoe trip in the region, passing through very scenic country as it flows from Kinuseo Falls to the Pine River near Chetwynd. The upper part of the river (from the falls to Tumbler Ridge) can be run as an overnight trip. The stretch from TR down is a more serious two or three day trip, with no access points and several ledges and rapids. The lower Murray River is notable in that it provides a quality "wilderness" experience in relatively close proximity to communities. There are several good fishing spots the length of the Murray.							
Kinuseo Falls to Tumbler Ridge	**1**	Scenic with waterfalls. Clear water.	Motorized / Non-motorized	1 day	2 river	**Tumbler Ridge- Kakwa** Touring opportunities. Optimum water – July	**H**
Tumbler Ridge to Salt River	**2**	Very scenic. Camping areas. Clear water.	Motorized / Non-motorized	1 day	2 river w/ 3 passages high water = 3	**Tumbler Ridge- Kakwa** Touring Opportunities Wilderness Opportunities Optimum water – July	**H**
Salt River to East Pine	**3**	Very scenic, camping areas "wilderness". Clear water. Play areas: including a section near Lone Prairie.	Non-motorized (recommended)	2 day	2 river w/ 3 passages high water = 3	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** Touring and Wilderness Opportunities. No signs of roads. Optimum water - July	**H**
PEACE							
▸ The *Peace River* has been tamed by the dams and is rated as suitable for beginners. Deep and up to a kilometre wide with over 100 islands ranging from half to 120 hectares in size, the river continues over a 150 kilometres to the Alberta border and beyond. The stretch from Hudson's Hope to Halfway River is silt free and clear. Undeveloped camping is available in the many beaches, sand and gravel bars, sheltered backwaters and channels. Observation of wildlife and good fishing at river mouths compliment the journey. Access points include Hudson's Hope, "old ferry landing", Halfway River "old fort", Peace Island Park at Taylor and Clayhurst ferry landing.							
Hudson's Hope to Halfway River	**1**	Clear. Regulated water flow. Islands, beaches and camping opportunities	Motorized / Non-motorized	1 to 2 day	1 river	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** Very high values for easy family oriented kayaking.	**H**
Halfway River to Taylor	**2**	As above, although the river carries silt from Halfway River.	Motorized / Non-motorized	1 day	1 river	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** High values for easy family oriented canoeing.	**M**
Taylor to Alberta	**3**	As above.	Motorized / Non-motorized	1 day	1 river	**Dawson Creek** Moderate values for easy family oriented multi day canoeing.	**L**
PINE							
▸ The *Pine River* flows east from the Northern Rockies and culminates in Peace River (by Taylor). From the headwaters to Chetwynd, Hwy 97 runs beside the river providing access opportunities. Optimal river volumes are limited prior to joining with Hasler Creek where there are Class 2 opportunities for boating, canoeing and kayaking. These opportunities extend until the junction of the Sukunka River where canyon walls prevent take out until converging with the Murray. During optimal season this section is classified as Class 2 with 3 portions. Following Fort Sasquatch, the Pine is larger, tamer and is classified as class 1with 2 sections. Multi-day motorized and non-motorized boating are suitable activities.							
Hasler Creek to Sukunka junction	**A**	Scenic. Clear water.	Motorized / Non-motorized	1 day	2 river	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** Possibility of log jams and shallow gravel bars.	**M**
Sukunka to Murray River	**B**	2 kilometre canyon. Clear water.	Motorized / Non-motorized	1 day	2 river with 3 sections.	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** Noted as dangerous during high water. Mellows during low water. The canyon is described as difficult with no portage opportunities.	**M**
Murray to Peace River	**C**	Scenic.	Motorized / Non-motorized	117 km 2 day	1 river with 2 passages	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** Scenic sloping canyons with opportunities for wildlife viewing.	**H**
SUKUNKA							
▸ The *Sukunka River* is graded moderately difficult and begins at the waterfall culminating at Pine River. Access is by the Forest Service road that runs along side the river.							
		Scenic. Begins at the waterfall.	Motorized / Non-motorized		2 river	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**	**M**

---

[11] Refers to the entire section identified. Allows for clear passage of more difficult sections.

Stocked lakes include Boot, Boulder, Dinosaur, Heart, Stewart and Sundance in the Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope unit, and One Island Lake near Dawson Creek.

- ***Market and Socio-economic Assessment***

Markets - Lakes/rivers activities include kayaking, rafting, canoeing and fishing. There is no single market profile for this product, but instead several distinct segments and sub-segments. Canoeing and river kayaking each have two sub-segments, recreational paddling and whitewater, the latter entailing more skill and experience by participants. Rafting in BC is generally conducted down whitewater sections of rivers, but can also entail floating. Freshwater fishing occurs in streams, rivers, ponds or lakes. In BC, major species of interest include trout, char, salmon, steelhead and bass.

Murrav River Photo: BC Forest Service

Kayaking and canoeing generally require a good fitness level, and have their strongest appeal among younger travellers. Kayaking/canoeing operators frequently include bird watching and nature observation as secondary activities. Kayaking/canoeing can also play a secondary role as part of other travel experiences that involve wilderness activities.

In Canada, river kayakers tend to be younger than ocean kayakers, between 20 and 44 years of age. The majority (60%) are male, and travel with friends (29%) or couples (28%). Participants are from Canada (82%), the U.S. (12%) and overseas (6%). The demand for kayaking has increased over the past decade as access to better quality equipment and instruction makes it easier to learn and become proficient at the sport.

The canoeing market differs from the kayak market in some important ways. Although many demographic characteristics are similar (the average canoe participant is under the age of 35 (53%) and male (62%)), they are much more likely to travel with friends (48%), and perhaps of most significance to commercial operators, are just as likely to be international visitors than Canadians. In 1996, forty-five percent of commercially guided canoeists were Canadian, while 31% were German and 14% American.[12]

Although not conclusive, Canadian visitor data does suggest that the river kayak product appeals mostly to Canadian participants and secondarily Americans, while the canoe product has a much stronger appeal for the German and American markets. In terms of absolute size, the market for canoeing is much larger than kayaking. Participation rates for river kayaking are among the lowest of all outdoor recreation activities.

---

[12] Adventure Travel and Ecotourism in Canada: Strategic Framework for Development, p.3-31, The Randolph Group, January 1997.

While not strong enough to stand as a product itself, freshwater fishing can enhance the boating product in the study area. It was the fifth most popular sport in the US with 45.8 million people participating in this activity at least once in 1998. In Canada, the participation rate in 1996 for recreational fishing (both freshwater and saltwater) was 17.7 percent and in BC, 17.5 percent. While overall participation rates appear stable, spending on fishing has increased considerably over the last 10 years, a reflection of the increased affluence of fishing markets, especially among the lodge-based segment.

There is extensive competition regionally and across Canada for canoeing, kayaking, rafting and fishing. The Canadian Rockies, Kootenays, Thompson Okanagan and the Cariboo offer quality river/lake experiences, with better features than the Dawson Creek District. One product that the study area cannot offer is the multi-day trip lake system linked by waterways and portages such as is available at Bowron Lakes. Wilderness river/lakes activities and new products such as voyageur canoeing are available in all provinces.

There is expected to be continued growth in the future for canoeing and rafting especially and, to a lesser extent, kayaking. Canoeing is part of the North American heritage and is relatively easy to learn. It is also a portable activity as participants can easily take their boats to any river that is accessible by vehicle. Rafting can be made relatively safe and accessible to a range of outdoor adventure participants. River kayaking is a more demanding activity requiring considerable skill and higher levels of risk. Consequently it will probably grow more slowly than canoeing.

Impacts/Conflicts – Clients on commercially led lake paddling trips are looking for a sense of isolation and wilderness. Typically, they do not want to hear or see other motorized watercraft. Often larger lakes that provide the best opportunities for lake paddling trips also tend to attract powerboats. However, this is not presently a problem in the Dawson Creek FD. There may be some concerns over conflicts between motorized and non-motorized boating on some of the more popular rivers such as the Murray and the Pine.

In some locales, paddlers wishing to fish as part of their experience may come into conflict with guided fishing outfitters.

Business Development - Crown land tenure is generally not an issue with river and lake operators in the region as the frequency of trips does not warrant the associated time and cost. However, if there is restricted access to the lake, then specific tenure for access either to the lake or to specific areas of the shoreline for camping and picnicking purposes is required.

Whether canoeing, kayaking, rafting or fishing, the development of the lake/river product has to be tied to some outstanding recreational feature, aesthetic appeal or valued secondary activity. Infrastructure is also important as attracting participants and enthusiasts will require the development of more amenities to encourage stopovers. While this does not necessarily translate into high costs, minimum levels of access for put-ins and take-outs is essential. Good signage, as well as shuttling, supplies and rental services to self-guided users would also assist development.

More vertical integration of product design and marketing is required, including raising awareness of the potential of lakes and rivers among BC residents (i.e. enthusiasts who are activity-oriented travellers).

Capital costs are average for an outdoor adventure operation but infrastructure for access (put-ins and take-outs) and accommodation is important.

Conclusions - The potential for commercial activity on lakes and rivers in the study area is favourable, but not exceptional, as there is a lack of grade 3+ water that would attract enthusiasts and adventure seekers. Also the study area does not boast a lakes series with connecting waterways (rivers, streams) and portages that are usually preferred over single, isolated large lakes. Lakes connected in such a manner may provide opportunities for multi-day wilderness paddling trips. This should focus attention more on the casual participant interested in the softer, short duration adventures. Canoeing, rafting and fishing will be of more interest to the existing regional and short-haul travellers (western US and Canada) to the region, more so than kayaking. The river with the best potential is the Murray which could be promoted more among Alberta and BC canoeing enthusiasts.

The ability to package sport fishing, nature observation, historical interpretation with boating activities can help operators diversify, but avoidance of high use locations will be necessary to minimize conflicts with other users.

The trend toward more family participation in freshwater fishing could have benefits locally, especially among the Alaska Highway rubber-tire trade, which consists mainly of soft adventurers who would be looking for casual angling opportunities in conjunction with other lakes/rivers activities. Operators providing lessons from beginner to advanced, children and women, will attract the casual families and couples market.

Challenges for boating development in all areas include suitable put-in and take-out points, as well as shuttling, supplies and rental services to self-guided users.

RESOURCE CRITERIA							
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge- Kakwa**		**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**			**Dawson Creek**
		MURRAY	**WAPITI LAKE**	**PINE**	**PEACE**	**WILLISTON LAKE**	**PEACE**
Uniqueness of Key Features	Setting[13]	High	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium
	Geography	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	High
	Wildlife	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Supportive Resources	Camping areas	Low	High	Medium	High	Low	High
	Scenery	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Access	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	High
Environmental Considerations		Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Low
Supportive infrastructure		Low	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
Associated products		Fishing, Water Activities					
Significance of associated products		High	High	High	High	High	High
Access to staging areas		High	High	High	High	High	High
Access from staging area to resources		High	Low	High	High	High	High
Prime season		July-August	July-August	July-August	July-August	July-August	July-August

---

[13] A high rating is associated with a more natural setting.

Discussion	▸ The unroaded Murray River has the potential of becoming a draw in the region as people look for a "primitive" non-motorized experience. At this time there are few motorized boats travelling through the lower sections. ▸ Wapiti Lake is unroaded and considered to be an excellent river that requires that the canoes be brought up the river. ▸ Good Class 2 to 3 whitewater paddling can be found on the Wolverine River and Flatbed Creek, both 10 minutes from Tumbler Ridge. Be aware of falls and drops on both of these streams.	▸ The Peace River is a scenic multi-use river with many islands, beaches and other features complimentary to the non-motorized boat product. ▸ The East Pine is a scenic multi-use river with limited sections for camping. ▸ Williston Lake has winds that may be treacherous for non-motorized craft..	▸ This section of the Peace is less interesting than the upper Peace.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA				
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**	**Dawson Creek**
Markets	Demand	Medium-High	Medium	Low-Medium
	Competition	Low	Low	Low
	Overall potential	High	Medium	Low
Impact/ Conflict	Use	Medium	Low	Medium
	Community/Social	Medium	Medium	Medium
Business Develop-ment Needs	Crown tenure	Low	Low	Low
	Infrastructure	Low	Medium	Medium
	Capital	Low	Low	Low
Level of community support		High	Medium	Medium
Employment opportunities		Low	Low	Low
Opportunities		▸ Whitewater (Wolverine, Flatbed) ▸ Soft adventure canoeing or kayaking (Murray, Wapiti)	▸ 2-3 day floating trips on the Peace ▸ River kayaking (Peace, Pine) ▸ Package with freshwater fishing (Chinaman, Dinosaur, Boulder, Heart, Stewart, Sundance)	▸ Recreation paddling (canoe or kayak on some sections of the Kiskatinaw) ▸ Package with frontcountry activities in Dawson Creek or agri-tourism products
Development Considerations	Regional	▸ Whether canoeing, kayaking, rafting or fishing, the development of the lake/river product has to be tied to some outstanding recreational feature, aesthetic appeal or valued secondary activity. ▸ Secondary activities are very important as rivers are mostly grades 1 and 2. Enthusiasts will not find many challenging river grades in the region. ▸ The region is not well known among potential guided markets as a fishing destination; neighbouring areas have more variety, bigger fish and greater quantities of fish. However, the fishing resource is well suited for development as a secondary activity that could be targeted at the casual angler who is visiting for some other primary purpose. ▸ Water levels and conditions are an important consideration for some waterways, especially those with dams (e.g. Peace River). ▸ High seasonal flow variations, log jams and high, steep banks pose safety and access problems on many systems.		
	Local	▸ Convenience of access, put-ins and pull-outs will enhance development prospects. ▸ More vertical integration of product design and marketing is required. ▸ Signage needs to be upgraded.	▸ Convenience of access, put-ins and pull-outs will enhance development prospects. ▸ Signage needs to be upgraded. ▸ Linkages to other activities must be developed.	▸ Convenience of access, put-ins and pull-outs will enhance development prospects. ▸ Paddling potential on the Pine and Peace may see conflicts with motorized users (e.g. jet boats).

- ***High Opportunity Areas***

Polygon Number	Description of Polygon
1	Murray River (all sections)
2	The Peace River from Hudson's Hope to Halfway River (section 1)
3	East Pine River from the Murray River to the Peace River (section 3)

5.6.2 Lakes and Rivers (Motorized)

The motorized lakes and rivers product includes all motor boating activities such as power boating and houseboating.

Power boating is often used to support other activities such as hunting or fishing, but is increasingly used as a "touring" activity that is enjoyed for the ride itself as well as sights and activities along the way. Power boats can have outboard or inboard engines and are typically propeller driven. There are many power boats designs from those suitable for fishing to those intended to pull waterskiers.

An important segment of motor boating is jet boating. Jet boating involves river travel in high-powered shallow-draft boats with a jet-propulsion system (no propeller) that enables maneuvering in very shallow water. Jet boats are typically quite small (18-23 feet) and can accommodate 6-12 passengers. Smaller winding rivers with long navigable stretches (at least 15-20 km), and which provide a sense of isolation, are preferred. The activity is suitable for any age or level of fitness. Day-use jet boating is most common, but multi-day trips can be offered on specific rivers that permit navigation for long distances, and offer a variety of sights and ancillary activities.

Houseboats are large motorized flat bottom motorized craft built to house people. Furnished with bedrooms, kitchens, living areas and bathrooms, they are designed to simulate the comforts of home. The boats are not suited for swells, choppy water or strong winds and are not maneuverable. They are generally associated with lakes.

- ***Regional Overview***

Strengths	Numerous rivers and a mix of large and small lakes in different settings. Quality and variety of scenery. Highly accessible. Remote (fly-in lakes). Lakes with wild fish and stocked.
Weaknesses	Distance from major markets. Lack of extreme/challenging river grades. Short operating season.
Concerns	Conflicts between motorized and non-motorized uses. Potential negative impacts on the "remote" experience.

- ***Resource Assessment***

A number of the rivers and lakes in the Dawson Creek Forest District provide exceptional motorized product opportunities with an emphasis on jet boating.

Follow the route of early explorers, such as Alexander Mackenzie and Simon Fraser, up British Columbia's mighty Peace River. See where the old trading forts were located, including the first fort site built in the mainland of British Columbia in 1794. You will see unusual limestone formations, pan for gold or uncover fossils. For added excitement take a trip on the wild side as you travel up narrow channels and canyons with as little as six inches of water on some rivers and as large as grade 2-3 rapids on other rivers. Deer and bald eagles are commonly seen on these trips, while moose, elk and black bears may also be encountered. There are also fantastic opportunities for fishing along the river. Arctic grayling, rainbow trout, walleye, dolly varden and mountain whitefish can all be challenged with lures or flies (from website)

The Murray River trip begins at East Pine where you begin your adventure up the Murray. This trip has grade II-III whitewater, great scenery and the area is known for its high numbers of moose, elk and bears. The most exciting part of the trip has to be travelling to the base of Kinuseo Falls which are higher than Niagara Falls (Website Ad)

Principal Rivers

River	Section	Resources R	ecommend Activity	Dist / Min. Time	Class river[14]/ sections	Unit / Comments	Suitability
MURRAY							
The Murray River flows past Tumbler Ridge. The upper part of the river, from Tumbler Ridge can be run as a day trip or as part of a road loop tour. This excursion is certain to be a highlight. Another memorable trip is down river to the Painted Canyon near Salt Creek. Beyond that, the lower Murray River is notable in that it provides a quality "wilderness" experience in relatively close proximity to communities.							
Kinuseo Falls to Tumbler Ridge	**1**	Scenic with waterfalls. Kinuseo Falls. Clear water.	Motorized / Non-motorized	1 day	2 river	**Tumbler Ridge- Kakwa** Touring opportunities. Optimum water – July	**H**
Tumbler Ridge to Salt River	**2**	Very scenic. Camping areas. Clear water.	Motorized / Non-motorized	1 day	2 river w/ 3 passages high water = 3	**Tumbler Ridge- Kakwa** Touring Opportunities Wilderness Opportunities Optimum water – July	**H**
Salt River to East Pine	**3**	Very scenic, camping areas "wilderness". Clear water. Play areas: including a section near Lone Prairie.	Non-motorized (recommended)	2 day	2 river w/ 3 passages high water = 3	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** Touring and Wilderness Opportunities. No signs of roads. Optimum water - July	**M**
PEACE							
The Peace River has been tamed by the dam and is rated as suitable for beginners. Deep and up to a kilometre wide with over 100 islands ranging from half to 120 hectares in size, the river continues over a 150 kilometres to the Alberta border and beyond. The stretch from Hudson's Hope to Halfway River is silt free and clear. Undeveloped camping is available in the many beaches, sand and gravel bars, sheltered backwaters and channels. Observation of wildlife and good fishing at river mouths compliment the journey. Access points include Hudson's Hope, "old ferry landing", Halfway River "old fort", Peace Island Park at Taylor and Clayhurst ferry landing. Circle tour opportunities linking Hudson's Hope to Taylor or Halfway River by jet boat and tour bus provide a multi-activity opportunity linked to a road tour product.							
Hudson's Hope to Halfway River	**1**	Clear. Regulated water flow. Islands, beaches and camping opportunities.	Motorized / Non-motorized	1 to 2 day	1 river	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** Very high values for easy family oriented boating.	**H**
Halfway River to Taylor	**2**	As above, although the Motor river carries silt from Halfway River.	ized / Non-motorized	1 day	1 river	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** High values for easy family oriented boating.	**H**
Taylor to Alberta	**3**	As above.	Motorized / Non-motorized	1 day	1 river	**Dawson Creek** Moderate values for easy family oriented multi day boating.	**M**
PINE							
The Pine River flows east from the Northern Rockies and culminates in Peace River (by Taylor). From the headwaters to Chetwynd, Hwy 97 runs beside the river providing access opportunities although the river is not suitable for motorized activities. Optimal river volumes are limited prior to joining with Hasler Creek where there are Class 2 opportunities for boating, canoeing and kayaking. The section of the river between the Sukunka and the Murray falls within a canyon in sections and the water can be swift and wild. Skilled boaters through this section can accomplish a fast jet boat trip that has potential for attracting those seeking a thrill. The East Pine River begins at Fort Sasquatch where it converges with the Murray River. From here on the East Pine (as it is called) is larger, tamer and is classified as class 1 with class 2 sections. Multi-day boating and associated activities can be achieved on this 117-kilometre stretch of river. The East Pine is noted for the wildlife, small waterfalls, erosion features and the possibility of fossils..							
Hasler Creek to Sukunka junction	**A**	Scenic. Clear water.	Motorized / Non-motorized	1 day	2 river	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** Possibility of log jams and shallow gravel bars.	**L**
Pine Canyon (Sukunka to Murray River)	**B**	2 kilometre canyon. Clear water.	Motorized / Non-motorized	1 day	2 river with 3 sections.	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** Noted as dangerous during high water. Mellows during low water. The canyon is described as difficult.	**H**
Murray to Peace River	**C**	Scenic.	Motorized / Non-motorized	117 km 2 day	1 river with 2 passages	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope** Scenic sloping canyons with opportunities for wildlife viewing.	**H**

---

[14] Refers to the entire section identified. Allows for clear passage of more difficult sections.

Principal Lakes

Lake	Resources	Unit / Comments	Suitability
GWILLIM	Large lake. Fish. Provincial Park.	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope -** Large and deep. Strong winds. Suitability is affected by the poor fishing.	**M**
MOBERLY / CAMERON	Large lake with 2 Prov Parks. Small lake.	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope -** Good canoeing. The lake is large and deep, subject to strong winds. Fishing is fair. Cameron - excellent canoeing.	**M**
DINOSAUR	Large reservoir.	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope -** A dammed lake subject to strong winds.	**M**
WILLISTON	Very large reservoir. Good fishing.	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope -** The largest man made lake in Canada, and the country is scenic and rugged with slopes containing open meadows suitable for wildlife observation. The lake has excellent fishing and wildlife is abundant along the shores. Although there are strong winds on the main lake, the Peace Arm can be suitable for houseboats and smaller craft. The numerous small bays along the 115 kilometre Peace Arm provide shelter from strong winds that may occur. Boaters must exercise caution, as the lake contains drifting debris continually emerging from the flooded lake bottom. Portage Mountain Yacht Club provides docking facilities and Dunlevy Recreation Area provides a boat ramp (that may be unusable when the water is low). The lake is subject to very strong winds and floating debris. Camping facilities and a boat launch located in Dunlevy Creek	**M**

Stocked lakes include Boot, Boulder, Dinosaur, Heart, Stewart and Sundance in the Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope unit, and One Island Lake near Dawson Creek.

- ***Market and Socio-economic Assessment***

Markets – Motor boating is a popular recreational activity among North Americans, where there are high rates of participation and high levels of boat ownership. In Canada, 9.3% of Canadian participate in power boating as an outdoor activity.[15] In BC, boat ownership continues to increase with residents having 17 percent of all pleasure craft in Canada.[16]

Motor boating is a activity which can be participated in by all ages, regardless of level of fitness. However, participation tends to be weighted in favour of younger adults and males.

Motor boating is usually undertaken as a means to participate in some other activity such as fishing or wildlife viewing. Scenery and other natural features is an important aspect of cruising and touring, whether on lakes or rivers. Attractants include fish, scenery, large mammals, beaches, islands, parks and historic and native features. Activity is usually clustered around existing boat launches, marinas and fishing grounds.

While participation rates suggests a high potential for product development, other considerations have to be taken into account. Chief among these is the fact that the study area is not known as a power boating destination. The absence of large natural lakes such as occur in the Shuswap and Okanagan means the area will find it challenging to attract destination boaters. This is reflected in the visitor statistics which do not show power boating to be a significant reason for visiting the area.

Impacts/Conflicts – Motorboating, in particular power boating is generally not compatible with non-motorized boating and spatial separation is usually preferred to keep conflicts to a minimum. There is also concern about the environmental impacts, specifically on wildlife habitat, of power boating. Some areas with capability for commercial jet boating are also areas where people have built homes near the river. The noise and frequency of commercial jet boat use maybe an issue of concern for these residents. There may also be conflicts with licensed hunting and fishing guides if commercial jet boat operators provide access to areas of high quality hunting and fishing.

---

[15] The Importance of Nature to Canadians: Survey Highlights, Environment Canada, 2000

[16] Marine Tourism Marketing Strategy, p.2-6, Marine Tourism Marketing Council, March 1996.

Many boaters along the Peace River engage in fossil collection. Although any visitor can pick up loose fossils from the surface of Crown lands, any excavation in BC requires a permit from the Royal BC Museum.

Business Development - Commercial motorboating may require foreshore leases or licences of occupation to accommodate use of picnic sites, overnight campsites and/or cabins (or other roofed structures).

Pleasure boating is dependent on several factors, including the geographic conditions favouring the activity and the availability of facilities. Any increase in visitation will have to be accompanied by the development of marinas, destination resorts and sport fishing operations, since fishing is a primary attractant.

For commercial development, power boating is a capital intensive product. Equipment can easily run in the hundreds of thousands of dollars and require extensive repair and maintenance. The length of the operating season is a very important consideration, as it directly determines revenue streams, cash flows and the potential return on investment.

Conclusions – The opportunities for motorboating in the region are modest but there are areas where niche development may be able to diversify the product base. The low number of boaters in the region and the lack of key attractants such as large, natural lakes and good fishing opportunities does not justify significant investments in infrastructure. Play area jet boating and power cruising on Williston Lake and the Peace River could both be developed through the targeted deployment of marinas/launches and related services. Jet boating to Kinuseo Falls along the upper Murray (Tumbler Ridge), the section identified as the Pine Canyon (Chetwynd) and the Peace River around Hudson's Hope have good opportunity for more promotion. For power cruising, there is still a need to link tour products with other activities such as heritage interpretation or wildlife viewing.

Guide outfitters may be in a better position than most to take advantage of product development. With their existing investments in equipment, infrastructure and personnel, any market development during the summer high season would complement their primary autumn hunting product.

RESOURCE CRITERIA							
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**			**Dawson Creek**	
		Murray	**Peace**	**Williston**	**Pine**	**Peace**	**Pine**
Uniqueness of Key Features	Setting	High	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Geography	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Wildlife	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Supportive Resources	Rapids (class 2-3)	High	Low	Low	Medium	Low	Medium
	Camping	Medium	High	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Fish	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Environmental Considerations		High	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
Supportive infrastructure		Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Associated products		Fishing, Nature observation, Road tours					
Significance of associated products		High	Low	High	Low	Low	Low
Access to staging areas		High	High	High	High	High	Medium
Access from staging area to resources		High	High	High	Medium	High	Medium
Prime season		July-Aug	May-Sept	May-Sept	July - Aug	May - Sept	July- Aug
Discussion		▸ Murray River has high potential for nature and scenic observation from Kinuseo Falls beyond to the Painted Canyon, all within a day trip from Tumbler Ridge. The lower section if approached from Fort Sasquatch is suitable although there are some technical sections.	▸ Peace River significance is heightened by the camping opportunities although access to the river limits focuses use on areas closest to the access. There is a potential with a road tour to loop Hudson's Hope and Taylor. ▸ Williston Lake has opportunities associated with boating and viewing, although strong winds may limit houseboat opportunities. ▸ A focus on the Pine section between the Sukunka and Murray. Rapids within a canyon offer an opportunity for commercial jet boating. ▸ A focus on the East Pine River between the Peace and Fort Sasquatch for jet boating. The narrow river valley is suitable nature observation and scenic interpretation.			▸ The section of the Peace River located within this unit is limited by the lack of communities, of scenic and recreation values. ▸ A focus on the East Pine river. Refer to the Hudson's Hope-Chetwynd Unit.	

Boating on the Peace River **Photo: BC Forest Service**

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA				
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**	**Dawson Creek**
Markets	Demand	Medium	Medium	Low
	Competition	Low	Medium	Low
	Overall potential	Medium	High	Low
Impact/ Conflict	Use	High	Medium	Low
	Community/Social	Medium	High	Medium
Business Development Needs	Crown tenure	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Infrastructure	Low	Medium	Low
	Capital	High	High	High
Level of community support		Medium	Medium	Medium
Employment opportunities		Medium	Medium	Low
Opportunities		▸ Personal Water Craft (PWC) rentals ▸ Access sites and services ▸ Jet boat tours of Kinuseo falls	▸ PWC rentals ▸ Guided cruises and tours of Williston Lake, Peace River (Hudson's Hope to Taylor), Pine Canyon and the East Pine ▸ Access sites and services	▸ PWC rentals ▸ Access sites and services ▸ Guided cruises and tours on the East Pine ▸ Link tours with regional golf packages
Development Considerations	Regional	▸ As with non-motorized activities, power boating has to be associated with some outstanding recreational feature, aesthetic appeal or valued secondary activity. ▸ Portaging of motor boats, even small craft, is not an option, so participation is restricted to 1 and 2 grade rivers. ▸ Rough water and waterfalls are an impediment to jet boats and thus will limit the operating areas, especially for commercial purposes. Similarly, log jams and sharp turns are hazards that require attention. ▸ Power boats should likely be separated from sensitive wildlife areas, especially at times when there is potential for significant disturbance. ▸ Safe and secure access and parking is required to encourage more visitation and commercial activity. ▸ Changing standards and regulations for tourism operators have significantly increased development costs for larger boats (i.e. those over 27 feet).		
	Local	▸ Potential conflicts between motorized and non-motorized commercial activity on the Murray River is a concern. ▸ Improved access and infrastructure required in all high potential areas.	▸ Potentially rapid changes in water levels below Peace Canyon dam would affect activity. ▸ Improved and expanded access to the Peace River is required for boaters. ▸ The historical and palaeontological attributes of the area should be factored into product design to differentiate it from the competition. ▸ Williston Lake can be dangerous for flat-bottom boats because of potentially rough conditions.	▸ The limited access into the East Pine intensifies jet boating to the segments closest to the access at Hart Creek or Taylor landing. Extended excursions over the entire length is a full day option. ▸ The Kiskatinaw River is a shallow river that is not suitable for the jet boating product.

- ***High Opportunity Areas***

Polygon Number	Description of Polygon
1	Peace River from Hudson's Hope to Taylor (Section 1 and 2)
2	Pine Canyon (section 2)
3	East Pine (section 3)
4	Upper Murray from Kinuseo Falls to Tumbler Ridge (section 1)
5	Middle Murray from Tumbler Ridge to Salt River (section 2)

5.6.3 Summer Trail Products

Trail products include hiking (generally frontcountry, mid-country or from a lodge), backpacking (backcountry), animal assisted, such as llama or horse packing (primarily backcountry) or horseback riding (front-country to backcountry). The activities take place on trails or off trail, terrain permitting.

Frontcountry trips are primarily single day. Backcountry trips are primarily multi-day. Mid-country trips can be either single or multi-day. Day use is usually based from a community, lodge, resort or guest ranch, ideally in an attractive natural setting where there is easy access to a network of trails. Multi-day trips usually require wilderness or near wilderness settings, and cabins or campgrounds to accommodate guests or recreationists. Accessibility to trails is required and alpine or sub-alpine zones are a preferred destination if possible. However, steep, rocky or boggy areas are considered as undesirable for commercial ventures because they are dangerous and can create too much liability for operators.

Generally, hiking and backpacking are self-guided. Horseback riding is generally associated with a guide. Llama or horse packing typically involve a guide/outfitter who offers overnight (or longer) pack trips into wilderness areas and which naturally include camping, cooking and other guide services. Operators offer both moving trips (move each day) or day trips from a base camp. There is a concern that lamas may be a potential vector for moving cloven hoofed diseases and parasites common to domestic animals into wild populations.

Horse packing is generally associated with the guest riding alongside on another horse. The llama packing product is essentially a hiking product, wherein llamas are used to pack the gear with participants walking or hiking alongside. Llamas are very sure-footed, and can access most areas that a hiker is willing to go. There is also some novelty associated with the animals and this can be an attractant in itself, although the prime motivation for participants is a wilderness experience in scenic remote terrain.

All terrain vehicles or ATV's are small open vehicles capable of traversing and climbing over rugged terrain. This ability has enabled users to utilize extensive areas. Of particular concern to land managers is the ability for the machines to adversely impact alpine and sub-alpine areas. An operating limit below 2000 metres has been put in place in the study area.

Trails are the key ingredient for the viability of any summer trail product, and therefore trails (and roads) are the primary screen. Wider roads serve mainly as access to narrower ones or trails. Good trails are preferred by hikers (and llama packers) whereas good trails or narrow gravel roads are preferred by horse riders, as these provide ideal footing for the horses, yet provide the rider with a sense of being part of the surroundings. Slopes are the next major consideration, as steeper slopes quickly become awkward for hikers, and particularly for horse and rider, and introduce the undesirable possibility of accidents and associated liability. Features such as attractive scenery, cabins, waterfalls, lakes etc. enhance the experience. Alpine areas, if accessible, are a considerable attractant.

Established trails require maintenance to assure their viability and safety. A commitment to undertake this responsibility lies with either provincial government (with a focus on Parks, Forest Service Recreation trails, community forests), local governments (regional parks), non-profit organizations (often times for activity specific use, such as cross-country skiing or snowmobiling) or private landowners (often associated with horseback riding).

- ***Regional Overview***

Strengths	Variable scenery and natural features. Ranch/farm culture. Maze of logging roads and seismic trails. Many trails near local communities. Evidence of mining history at several locations
Weaknesses	Distance from markets. Lack of well-developed, signed trails. Lack of linked tours. No commitment for long term maintenance of trails by various agencies. Few established campsites associated with trails. Current information is lacking on many of the existing trail conditions and no forum is maintained to track day to day conditions (mud/snow/wildlife etc) Many trails are wet and subject to degradation from horse use.
Concerns	Competition from Alberta and Cariboo-based operators. Conflicting uses. Multiple use on some trails.

- ***Resource Assessment***

Dawson Creek Forest District has numerous "trails" that were developed by trappers, miners, First Nations and recreation users. The many open meadows are commonly used. Other routes utilized by hikers include old forestry roads and seismic lines. There are other possible routes and horse packing trails used by guide outfitters that are missing in the trail inventory database. The following table will list the most popular established trails suitable for the trail based product. The trails identified are suitable for day hiking, multi-day hiking or backpacking, animal assisted, horse riding and by all terrain vehicles (ATV). The most notable trails for tourism development are those that access the alpine/subalpine and areas in close proximity to the population and access centres. Camping is dispersed.

Hiking (frontcountry and mid-country) and *Backpacking* (mid-country and backcountry) opportunities can take place in the many trails and roads in the Dawson Creek Forest District with a focus on the ridges and valleys of the Northern Rocky Mountains. There are a wide range of easy to challenging and difficult trails. There are some commercial operators conducting fly-in hiking and camping services (e.g. Hook Lake).

The primary focuses for the *front-country* are the trails close to the urban centres of Hudson's Hope, Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge.

The focus for the *mid-country* are the trails associated with the Butler / Aylard Range, Carbon Battleship, Mount Bickford, Bullmoose Mountain, Mount Spieker and Reesor Ridge, and the Babcock / Core / Quintette Area.

The focus for the *backcountry* are those associated with the Burnt River Area, Mount LeMoray, Howling Wolves, Mount Crum and Mount Collier, Sukunka Ridge, the Bat Lake Area, Pyramid Peak, Albright

Fossil Fish Camp Photo: BC Forest Service

Ridge, Monkman Lake Trail, Mount Bulley , the Wapiti /Onion Area, Shark's Fin , Fossil Bay/ Becker Area, the Warner Trail and the Red Deer/ Whatley Area.

Llama packing can take place in the more remote backcountry areas. There is a concern that the llamas may carry infectious diseases to indigenous cloven hoofed mammals such as the Mountain Caribou , whose numbers are already in decline. Staging areas (trail heads) must be accessible by road. Suitable areas may include the mid-country mountain ranges near Tumbler Ridge and Chetwynd.
Horse packing and riding has potential as a front, mid, and back country product. There are a number of opportunities associated with the open and rolling alpine ridges and associated trails. Many of the opportunities may be linked to the ranches of Dawson Creek. Horse use on wet trails accelerates the deterioration of trails dramatically and is not advised.

All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) use could be focused on the Paradise Trail to One Island Lake, with fishing as a secondary activity.

The following table lists the trails suitable for the trail-based product.

Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope		**Suitability**
Front-country Trails	General Description: Baldy Trail and Chetwynd Community Forest is north of Chetwynd. Maurice Creek is located 3.4 km from Hudson's Hope and links the highway to Maurice Falls and pools and the Peace River. Dunlevy Park (Hudson's Hope) is adjacent to Williston Lake and is at the foot of Butler Ridge. Type of trail product: Day hiking. Comments: Chetwynd Community Forest has interpretive trails of varying length. Accompanying brochure. Maurice Creek. The hike goes past the upper and lower (at 6.5 km) falls. Further down at 1.5 hours is the Peace River. Swimming at pool below Maurice Falls. Baldy Trail reaches elevations of 900 metres on a well marked trail with numerous rest areas.	M
Butler / Aylard Ridge	General Description: Forests to spectacular alpine scenery, high numbers of wildlife, lakes. Unique rock formations. Type of trail product: Hiking, backpacking, horse riding/packing. Comments: Butler Ridge is a provincial park. On Butler Ridge there is a 24 km trail into alpine that ends at Chinaman Lake. Potential for wildlife viewing. Restriction may apply to horse riding / packing. The numbers of cloven hoofed mammals may restrict llama-assisted hiking.	H
Carbon / Battleship	General Description: Trail systems leads to Carbon Falls, Carbon Lake, Carbon Peak and Battleship Peak. Scenic area with limited sub-alpine and alpine. Type of trail product: Hiking, backpacking, horse riding/packing. Comments: There is a hut noted in Carbon Lake.	M
Mt Bickford and Little Boulder	General Description: There is an extensive rolling alpine and sub-alpine ridges suitable for hiking. Type of trail product: Hiking, backpacking, horse riding/packing. Comments: The Bickford trail climbs quickly from a powerline to a Forest service lookout tower in the sub-alpine. A 5 km hike to Bickford Lake along a trail on an open ridge.	H / M
Mt. LeMoray/ Howling Wolves	General Description: Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, cirque basins, several with small lakes. Extensive rolling alpine with peaks. Snow Lake. Type of trail product: Backpacking, horse riding/packing, animal assisted. Comments: Backcountry scenic hikes that can be accessed from a 13 km trail off Highway 97 or from the Hasler Creek road.	H
Burnt River / Watson Peak and Grant Peak Area	General Description: Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, cirque basins, several with small lakes. Extensive rolling alpine with peaks. Snow lake. Type of trail product: Backpacking, horse riding/packing, animal assisted. Comments: Remote backcountry scenic hikes that can be accessed from the Hasler Creek road. Remoteness limits the suitability to Medium. Heli-access.	M
Other trails near Hudson's Hope/ Chetwynd	General Description: Other potential opportunities in the unit. Type of trail product: Hiking, backpacking, horse riding/packing, animal assisted. Comments: Rocky Mountain, Bullhead Mountain, 20 Mile Ridge, Burnt River Area	M

Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa		**Suitability**
Elephant Ridge	Setting: Mid-country General Description: Spectacular scenery, access to sub-alpine and alpine. Type of trail product: Hiking, horse riding, animal assisted. Comments: Provincial Park. Guides are available for many of the trails.	**M**
Gwillim Lake	Setting: Front-country General Description: Spectacular scenery, access to lake, trails and campsites. Trails are in the forest. Type of trail product: Hiking. Comments: Provincial Park. Guides are available for many of the trails.	**H**
Trails in the vicinity of Tumbler Ridge	Setting: Front-country to mid-country. General Description: Spectacular scenery, access to tundra, bird viewing, Trails: Bald Spot Trail, TR Point Bird Sanctuary, Tumbler Ridge Point, Murray Lake, Bearhole Lake, Stoney Lake, Quality Creek Falls, Wolverine Trails, Bullmoose Creek, Flatbed Creek, Canyon Area (trails lead to dinosaur tracks and fossil sites and falls). Type of trail product: Hiking. Comments: Fast access to trail head. Guides are available for many of the trails.	**H**
Flatbed Falls Interpretive Trail	Setting: Front-country. General Description: Forest Interpretation with brochure. Swimming hole. Type of trail product: Day hike. Comments: Short hike to swimming hole and a 30 minute interpretive hike. Fast access to trail head. Not recommended for the elderly.	**M**
Bullmoose Mountain	Setting: Mid-country General Description: Alpine area fairly easy access. Type of trail product: Hiking. Comments: Access by road that leads to Bullmoose Mine.	**H**
Mt. Spieker	Setting: Mid-country General Description: Flat topped mountain. Spectacular subalpine/alpine scenery. Numerous trails. Type of trail product: hiking, backpacking, horse riding/packing. Comments: Access road (22 km) to subalpine/alpine. (Perry Creek) and extensive network of trails (exploration). Opportunities to link to the Reesor/Pinnacle Peak and Mt. Crum ridges. Trails are not marked.	**H**
Reesor Ridge, Mt. Collier, Pinnacle Peak and Mt. Crum Area	Setting: Mid-country (Reesor), Backcountry (Collier, Pinnacle Peak and Crum). General Description: Extensive and dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, cirque basins, several with small lakes. Extensive rolling alpine with peaks. Type of trail product: Hiking, backpacking, horse riding/packing. Comments: Reesor ridge can be readily accessed. The ridge extends along jagged peaks, cirques and rolling alpine for many kilometres ultimately linking to Mt. Crum. Reesor Ridge has high suitability with decreasing suitability with distance and time required to access.	**H / M**
Babcock Mountain, Core Lake Lodge, Quintette Mountain.	Setting: Mid-country. General Description: Spectacular views. Sub/alpine and alpine scenery. Babcock includes a valley within the area that contains unusual rock formations and towers. Core Lake includes a lodge and waterfalls. Type of trail product: Hiking, backpacking, horse riding/packing, animal assisted. Comments: Marked trails. Fast access to trail head. Core Lodge is open to the public. The trail extends into Windy Ridge, Roman Mt (dinosaur tracks at the summit), Quintette Mt, and Babcock Mt.	**H**
Albright Ridge Area	Setting: Backcountry. General Description: Extensive and dramatic backcountry landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, cirque basins, several with small lakes. Extensive rolling alpine with peaks. Type of trail product: Backpacking, horse riding/packing. Comments: A favourite multi-purpose area for summer and winter activities.	**H**
Shark's Fin Ridge Area	Setting: Backcountry General Description: Extensive and dramatic backcountry landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, cirque basins, several with small lakes. Extensive rolling alpine with peaks. Type of trail product: Backpacking, horse riding/packing. Comments: A favourite multi-purpose area for summer backcountry hikes. Shark's Fin ridge is a spectacular natural feature.	**H**

Kinuseo Falls / Monkman Pass (includes Greg Duke Memorial Recreation Area)	Setting: Mid-country/ backcountry General Description: Spectacular scenery from valley of adjoining ridges Type of trail product: Hiking, backpacking, horse riding/packing Comments: Easy access to trail system from Kinuseo Falls on a backcountry trail along the Murray River onto the Monkman Lake Trail to Monkman Lake. Campsites. Trail totals 24 km to Monkman Lake. Greg Duke MRA connects a series of lakes close to Kinuseo Falls	H
Other Remote Ridges	Setting: Backcountry General Description: Extensive and dramatic backcountry landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, cirque basins, several with small lakes. Extensive rolling alpine with peaks Type of trail product: Backpacking, horse riding/packing Comments: Includes Sukunka Ridge, Pyramid Peak Area, Mt. Bulley Area, Wapiti-Monkman Traverse, Fossil Bay / Becker Area and the Red Deer / Whatley Area. Remoteness and difficult access is what keeps these ranges and mountains from a high suitability	M
Wapiti - Onion Hiking Trail	General Description: Spectacular mountain scenery, Wapiti, Onion and smaller lakes. Wapiti River Type of trail product: Backpacking, horse riding/packing Comments: 30 km of trail that lead from the Wapiti FSR and culminate on the north end of Onion Lake. Easy access to trailhead from Wapiti FSR. Trail can link to the Wapiti - Monkman traverse and the Fossil Bay / Becker Area	H
Warner Lakes trail (Red Deer Falls Trail)	General Description: Spectacular and unique mountain scenery. Fossilized coral. Fossil Fish Lake. Red Deer Falls. Red Deer Canyon. Old log cabins Type of trail product: Backpacking, horse riding/packing Comments: Extensive multi-day adventure largely accessed by 4 wheel drive on a fairly long forest service road to the trailhead of the Red Deer Falls hiking trail. The trail to the falls is 14 km then extends another 20 km to Warner Lakes. There are numerous exploration trails that lead to old log cabins, creeks and lakes	H
Dawson Creek		**Suitability**
Bear Mountain Community Forest	General Description: Forest interpretation with brochure Type of trail product: Hiking, backpacking, horse riding/packing Comments: 1.5 km of interpretive trails and many kilometres of trails also suitable as winter cross country trails	H
Paradise Valley Trail to One Island Lake	General Description: Trail through unremarkable forest and marshes heading south along the Kiskatinaw River to One Island Lake Type of trail product: ATV Comments: One Island Lake offers reasonably good fishing and is stocked	M

- ***Market and Socio-economic Assessment***

Markets - The **hiking** market in Canada has a very broad based demographic profile with an even distribution across age groups and by gender. BC and Canadian residents make up three quarters of the market, while equal shares of the remaining quarter are accounted for by US and overseas visitors. Hiking is a primary trip activity for Canadian travellers, with 32 percent, or 5.2 million, participating in hiking or walking on their last long overnight pleasure trip. Of all outdoor recreation activities, hiking has been one of the fastest growing in terms of participation in the US. The US market grew by 93 percent from 24.7 million participants in 1982-1983 to 47.7 million participants in 1994-1995.[17] Hiking has a very good participation rate, and therefore high demand, among Europeans, especially Germans. Like trail riding, hiking is often combined with other activities such as wildlife viewing; camping and backpacking, all of which are experiencing increased participation levels. Many surveys combine hiking with backpacking for their statistics. As well, many operators include backpacking and extended trekking under the category of guided hikes.

In Canada, **trail riding** adventurers tend to be fairly evenly distributed across all age groups, with a higher participation rate from females (53.3%) than males. They tend to travel with friends (27.0%) or in couples (26.7%). Two-thirds are from Canada, although a significant portion come from other countries (19.4%).[18] Countries with a high level of interest in trail riding include Germany. Competition is relatively low for this product as there are very few operators regionally, but short-haul markets that pass through the region have a wide selection of trail riding opportunities in neighbouring regions, include the Cariboo-Chilcotin, Prince George and the Alberta Rockies. Important secondary activities include river activities, hiking and nature observation.

---

[17] National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, 1994-1995.

There is little market information available on the off-road or **ATV** market in British Columbia. What is known are the membership profiles from the many clubs that exist throughout North America. Participants tend to be young, with a predominance of the under 35 age group. There is usually an associated outdoor activity, often in a family setting, but driving itself is the main attraction. The OSA (Off-road Sportsman Association) has over 2000 members in 30 states across the U.S. They provide opportunities for drivers in a series of events that test the driver, navigator and their off-road vehicle including navigation exercises and outdoorsman skills. Obstacle courses and challenging routes are developed for each event organized by the OSA. The organization has a mandate to perpetuate vehicle and select other off-road activities for the sportsperson.

There is extensive competition regionally, nationally and internationally for travellers interested in pursuing hiking. For the hiking enthusiast in pursuit of a challenging, wilderness trek products like the West Coast Trail, the Nootka Island Trail and Berg Lake Trail have well-earned reputations and regularly attract capacity visitation. The national and provincial park systems cater extensively to this market. Similarly, many communities and all parks have developed trail inventories and related services that create a safe and interesting product for the soft adventurer/participant. There are several operators active in the Robson Valley and Prince George who are conducting treks into the Kakwa Recreation Area.

Demand will continue to increase for hiking both as a primary activity and as a secondary activity in conjunction with other products. Because of its accessibility, low skill requirements, relative safety and instant appeal, growth rates among North American and European hiking markets are expected to continue to climb even as the overall population ages. Trail riding is not expected to grow as strongly as hiking but nevertheless maintains an interest level that has yet to be exploited in the region.

Impacts/Conflicts - Some areas with high capability for llama packing/backpacking are within protected areas such as provincial parks. Such areas may or may not accommodate commercial backcountry recreation depending on management plans and policies. Access to many of the new protected areas will be unknown until park planning takes place.

The Ministry of Environment has expressed concerns about the transmission of exotic diseases from llamas to indigenous wildlife species.

Hiking is usually compatible with other recreation uses in the area. Uncrowded trails are preferred, particularly those attracted to backcountry hiking. There is some potential for conflict between commercial and non-commercial users at the more remote alpine lakes where camping facilities are limited. Public hikers tend to hike into these lakes whereas some commercial operators fly-in their clients. Visual and acoustic quality is important so the quality of the experience is sometimes dependent on other resource users in the hiking areas.

---

[18] Adventure Travel and Ecotourism in Canada: Strategic Framework for Development, p.3-32, 1997.

Forest tenures can have a major impact on areas where trails have been developed for the trail product. Clients do not expect to see major human alteration of the landscape, especially logging. In some cases, trails have been eliminated by harvesting.

Conflicting use with other outdoor adventure products is a major concern for the ATV product. Vehicle touring is generally not associated with the outdoor adventure market and off-road clubs are very conscious of the threats to their recreation. Many have established "no trace" and "tread lightly" mandates and are strong supporters of the principles behind "multi-use" land areas. As with snowmobilers, access to the land base is a very big issue. In the study area, ATVs are prohibited in the alpine so the availability of high quality areas is limited.

Business Development - The acquisition of some form of tenure over trail development and use areas would allow operators to maintain some control over competing commercial uses, but would over not extend to associated viewscapes and the environment. Parks and protected areas may have policies that preclude the use of horses, especially in sensitive areas such as alpine environments and riparian zones which are often scenic and are, therefore, desirable destinations for horse packing.

Infrastructure needs are not that extensive, but it is important to provide access and maintain a quality trail network, especially near the frontcountry where multi-use activities predominate. Trail activities are very reliant on road access to trailheads and trails that lead to wilderness destinations. Trailheads have to be accessible within a short distance from where vehicles must be parked. Circuit routes are preferred over out-and-back trails.

In general, the better the signage, parking, garbage disposal, washrooms, and interpretative facilities the better the trip experience will be for users. This means quality map information and some investment in public facilities. The private sector is rarely solely responsible for development simply because it does not have the necessary access to the land. Communities have an excellent opportunity to enhance their hiking product, especially in the frontcountry, as it can be developed in conjunction with recreation initiatives.

Features such as fishing, lakes, waterfalls, cabins, wildlife viewing opportunities, historical features etc. can enhance the trail experience. Their absence can also detract from the experience and make product development difficult. For backcountry hiking and backpacking that appeals to enthusiasts, alpine and sub-alpine environments are preferred and the built environment becomes less important.

Many of the preferred (alpine) destinations for this activity often have a very short snow-free season (late June/early July to late September); thus the commercially viable season is small.

Conclusions - Trail riding and packing has some good potential in the region particularly in the southern areas (where Prince George operators have developed product in the Kakwa Recreation Area). Although the trail features and viewing capability are not that good around

Dawson Creek, more linkages between agricultural and tourism could be built around a trail product. The development of a multi-use trail network could involve the shared use of working animals to defray the costs of operation. This may not involve Crown land access given the large tracts of private land and ALR in the area.

Hiking has some good potential in the region because of high quality resources, some good trails and visitor markets that place a high value on hiking activity. Among non-resident visitors to Northeast BC hiking/backpacking is one of the most important outdoor activities among non-residents. The potential for commercial hiking tours spans a full range of options from multi-day trekking tours to short interpreted tours of the frontcountry. Many hiking participants become repeat clients, so increasing the opportunity for new experiences should increase the potential for repeat customers. Packaging with cultural, heritage and other nature-oriented activities could enhance the product.

Commercial operators must provide additional value to gain customers, either through a quality experience (not only the hike but interpretation, meals and lodging) and/or adding other desired activities, which the customers cannot do on their own.

Trail riding and hiking in more remote and high elevation locales could be augmented by hut development, which would allow for multi-day tours, and linkages with higher quality amenities (e.g. accommodation). This product would appeal to the hiking enthusiast market. There is a growing market, especially in the US, for wilderness camping.

RESOURCE CRITERIA				
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**	**Dawson Creek**
Uniqueness of Key Features	Setting (variety)	High	High	Low
	Geography	High	High	Low
	Wildlife	Medium	High	Medium
Supportive Resources	Lakes	High	High	Medium
	Rivers/Fish	High	High	Medium
	Subalpine/alpine	High	High	Low
	Viewpoints	High	High	Low
	Unique formations	High	High	Low
Environmental Considerations		High	High	Low
Supportive infrastructure (trails, campgrounds, signage, etc)		High	Medium	Medium
Associated products		Hut system, water activities, nature observation, camping.		
Significance of associated products		Medium	Medium	High
Access to staging areas		High	High	High
Access from staging area to resources		Medium-High	High	High
Prime season		Summer/Fall	Summer/Fall	Summer/Fall
Discussion		▸ This unit straddles the Northern Rockies and contains some of the most remote areas of the Forest District. There are a variety of features including lakes, high rocky ridges and peaks, rolling alpine, waterfalls and unique formations that make this an area conducive to the trail product.	▸ This unit straddles a low section of the Northern Rockies. There are alpine ridges with views and slopes containing open meadows. High numbers of wildlife although sightings are incidental.	▸ This unit is primarily rural with forested sections the south along the Kiskatinaw River. The forested section contains low elevation ridges with small lakes and marshes. There are few vistas. The area has limited appeal as a trail product

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">UNITS:</th><th>Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa</th><th>Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope</th><th>Dawson Creek</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Markets</td><td>Demand</td><td>Medium</td><td>Medium</td><td>Medium</td></tr>
<tr><td>Competition</td><td>Low-High</td><td>Low-High</td><td>Low-High</td></tr>
<tr><td>Overall potential</td><td>Medium</td><td>Medium</td><td>Medium</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Impact/ Conflict</td><td>Use</td><td>Low-Medium</td><td>Low-Medium</td><td>Low-Medium</td></tr>
<tr><td>Community/Social</td><td>Low</td><td>Low</td><td>Low</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Business Development Needs</td><td>Crown tenure</td><td>Low</td><td>Low</td><td>Low</td></tr>
<tr><td>Infrastructure</td><td>Low</td><td>Low</td><td>Low</td></tr>
<tr><td>Capital</td><td>Medium</td><td>Medium</td><td>Medium</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Level of community support</td><td>High</td><td>High</td><td>High</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Employment opportunities</td><td>Low</td><td>Low</td><td>Low</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Opportunities</td><td>▸ Commercial trail guiding in Monkman Park – a PUP is available.
▸ Multi-activity packages with river activities, hiking and wildlife viewing.</td><td>▸ Multi-activity packages with river activities, hiking and wildlife viewing.
▸ Preferred areas include the Kakwa Area and Wapiti and Hook lakes. Possible karst and cave interpretation around Jarvis Lake could be linked.</td><td>▸ Linkages with agri-tourism and dude ranching.
▸ Day use activities targeted at the Alaska Highway traveller.
▸ Tours featuring autumn colours of larch, aspen and birch.
▸ Day use tours on Bear Mountain.
▸ Walking tours (Dawson Creek).
▸ ATV tours to One Island Lake.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Development Considerations</td><td>Regional</td><td colspan="3">▸ Trail riding and packing generally requires access to large tracts of Crown land where some trail development has taken place. Contact with other users, especially those using mechanized transportation, is seen as undesirable. Unaltered landscapes are preferred.
▸ Day use trail riding is more compatible with multi-use trails, as this product is not so highly associated with wilderness. However, the use of trails for multi-day wilderness trips needs to be planned relative to other uses, e.g. horse or llama packing and ATV tours are likely not compatible.
▸ Horse packing is very reliant on road access to trailheads and trails that lead to wilderness destinations. Circuit routes are preferred over out-and-back trails.
▸ Wildlife viewing opportunities are a major advantage for trail riding and packing, but these opportunities are minor in the study area. Impacts on wildlife can be minimized with the appropriate management, but restrictions in very sensitive areas may necessitate designated trails.
▸ The use of llamas for trail riding and packing is being questioned because of possible disease transmission to indigenous ungulates.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Local</td><td>▸ As a means of transport, riding and packing should be seen as a form of access to the region's high quality natural features.</td><td>▸ As a means of transport, riding and packing should be seen as a form of access to the region's high quality natural features.</td><td>▸ Ranching/farming is a key sector; working farms/ranches will appeal to visitors.
▸ Shared use of working animals, as an example, could lower capital costs.</td></tr>
</table>

Shark's Fin **Photo: BC Forest Service**

- *High Opportunity Areas*

Polygon Number	Description of Polygon
1	Butler / Aylard Ridges
2	Mt Bickford
3	Mt LeMoray Area
4	Howling Wolves Peak
5	Gwillim Lake
6	Bullmoose Mt
7	Mt Spieker Area
8	Reesor Ridge Area
9	Trails in the vicinity of Tumbler Ridge (includes Bearhole Lake, Flatbed Creek, Bullmoose Creek)
10	Babcock / Core Area
11	Quintette Mt
12	Albright Ridge Area
13	Shark's Fin Area
14	Monkman Lake Trail (includes Greg Duke Memorial Recreation Area)
15	Wapiti / Onion Area
16	Warner Trail
17	Bear Mountain

5.6.4 Snowmobiling

Snowmobiling has been increasing in popularity over the past few years. Advancement in design, weight, reliability and horsepower have enabled sledders or snowmobilers to access difficult terrain and to achieve greater speeds and distances. Logging roads have provided access to remote and spectacular mountain ranges. Avalanches, inclement weather, clouds and resulting loss of visibility are hazards that are increasing in profile as sledders continue to push the limits advanced by technology.

There are two major snowmobile segments: enthusiasts and participants. Snowmobiling ***enthusiasts*** are those who engage in the activity several times a year. Enthusiasts are more likely to live near areas that have good snowmobiling terrain, own snowmobiles and be part of a local snowmobiling club or association. There are those who seek hard or extreme adventure and will look for challenging terrain that includes untracked powder, jumps, and "powder play areas" – large, open areas with high snowfall. They enjoy the experience of high performance snowmobiles. Another group are the "travellers", who enjoy snowmobiles as a means of getting access to wilderness and other town destinations while enjoying the outdoors. ***Participants*** often take on snowmobiling as a day activity as a part of longer trip involving other activities such as downhill skiing. They will not have their own snowmobiles and will require gear as well as basic operating and safety instruction. Participants will value the scenery and wildlife viewing opportunities in addition to the thrill of operating the snowmobile. Participants will go on guided tours whereas enthusiasts are more likely to plan a trip on their own. All the groups enjoy well-maintained, integrated network of trails for touring to interesting and unique destinations.

- ***Regional Overview***

Strengths	Dispersed communities. Variability of terrain. Maze of seismic trails criss-crossing the foothills and prairie. Proximity to growing Alberta markets.
Weaknesses	Lack of accommodation in many communities. Lack of trails. Medium to high avalanche hazards. Shifting climatic conditions (Chinook winds). Safety concerns.
Concerns	High potential for conflict with other users and with sensitive wildlife habitats. Lack of public sector funding to develop and maintain opportunities. Uncertainty over land management, access and use.

- ***Resource Assessment***

The open sub-alpine and alpine ridges in the region favour an array of recreation activities including snowmobiling. Optimal snowfall, outstanding scenery, ready access, a variety of terrain including extensive ridges, bowls, cornice drops, glaciers, ice fields, rolling forest and meadows, logging roads, numerous seismic lines and well-developed and maintained trails establishes the Dawson Creek Forest District as an attractive region for snowmobilers of all ages and abilities.

The best known areas are in the Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope Unit. The Pine Valley Mountains along Highway 97 include the ranges associated with Mt. Garbitt, LeMoray, Le Hudette, Goodrich, Watson, Linklater and Howling Wolves. The ridges are readily accessed from Highway 97and provide high quality intermediate to expert snowmobiling opportunities. There are avalanche risk dangers associated with the steep slopes. Trails are noted in the following table.

Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope	
Bickford Mountain Trail	General Description: Off Highway 97, 70 km from Chetwynd, you can park your vehicle and begin a challenging ride on the marked Bickford Mountain. Comments: This 15 km trip is for experienced riders only. Climb to 5,000 feet and explore the bowls and meadows. The limited area suitable for riding reduces the suitability to a **Medium**.
Little Boulder	General Description: Extensive alpine area with rolling alpine, cirques and bowls. Comments: The optimum terrain, snow and easy access up the Silver Sand road earns this area a **High** suitability. Consideration: Avalanche
Mount West	General Description: Extensive alpine area with rolling alpine, cirques, bowls. Comments: Access, snowfall and terrain variety earns this area a **High** suitability. Access begins at Powder Ski King Ski Village where you can find parking and accommodations. Ride an easy, groomed trail 7.5 km into the mountains. More experienced riders can climb up to 7,000 feet and experience true Rocky Mountain riding. Consideration: The highest opportunities are outside the Dawson Creek Forest District. Avalanche.
LeMoray	General Description: Extensive alpine area with rolling alpine, cirques and bowls. Comments: Access, snowfall and terrain variety earns this areas a **High** suitability. Access is along the Hasler FSR. Consideration: Avalanche, remoteness.
Hasler and Brazion	General Description: Extensive alpine area with rolling alpine, cirques and bowls. Comments: Access, snowfall and terrain variety earns this area a **High** suitability. The area offers easy sledding on a marked trail for the whole family to enjoy. Turn off Highway 97 and travel on a 55 km the Hasler logging road as far as the snow conditions will allow. When the snow gets too deep, its time to park your vehicle and begin sledding. Consideration: Avalanche
Howling Wolves	General Description: Extensive alpine area with rolling alpine, cirques and bowls. Comments: Access, snowfall and terrain variety earns this areas a **High** suitability. Consideration: Avalanche, remoteness.
Burnt River / Watson Area	General Description: Extensive alpine area with rolling alpine, cirques and bowls. Comments: Access, snowfall and terrain variety earns this areas a high suitability although remoteness reduces the suitability to **Medium**. Consideration: Avalanche, remoteness.

Snowmobiling in the Northern Rockies **Photo: BC Forest Service**

Tumbler Ridge / Kakwa	
Bullmoose Mountain	General Description: Alpine area with rolling alpine. Comments: Although the area is suitable for snowmobiling and is readily accessed, riding quality is limited reducing the suitability to a **Medium**
Mt. Spieker / Reesor	General Description: Extensive alpine area with rolling alpine particularly when linked to the Reesor Ridge Area. Comments: This is a great area separated from Babcock and not usually well travelled. Great exploring with beautiful panoramic views. Easy access from Perry Creek Road but mountain riding requires at least intermediate to expert skills. The suitable snow conditions, terrain and access earn this unit a **High** suitability. Considerations: Avalanche
Bearhole / Thunder Mountain	General Description: Extensive trail and road network that link Tumbler Ridge, One Island Lake. Rolling and flat terrain. Thunder Mountain provides a winding mountain trail ride that leads up along the ridge line with a forestry lookout tower with panoramic views to Alberta. Comments: Bearhole is a small area with numerous cut lines and trails. Endless trail combinations. Suitable for all beginner skill levels. Thunder Mountain provides variety and a destination feature. The snow conditions, lack of challenges and monotony of the landscape reduces the suitability to **Medium**. Consideration: Caution is stressed to newcomers on the ease of becoming lost.
Quintette Mountain and the Babcock / Core Area	General Description and Comments: this area is made up of a number of key sites: Babcock Mountain starts off Boundary Highway. The marked trail winds to an old cut line that takes you up into the alpine. Great views of the mine and town. There are numerous side trails and viewpoints to explore. A lower trail takes you around the mountain to the lodge. From the lower areas the beginner level progresses with altitude to intermediate levels. Quintette Mountain has a trail that quickly climbs to open, sub-alpine terrain before dropping down into Kinuseo Valley. Core Lodge is a day lodge open to everyone and created by the Tumbler Ridge Riders Snowmobile Club from an old steel exploration shed. It contains seating areas and fireplaces and has panoramic views of the Windy Ridge Area. Windy Ridge is a rugged alpine area with many exciting climbs and bowls and steep alpine peaks that offer the expert rider some real test for his high powered machine or terrific views for the family and intermediate riders. Summit Meadows is a great play area with groomed trails just off Windy Ridge in sight of the Annual Windy Ridge Challenge Hillclimb held in March. Trails lead to the side of Roman Mountain and continue to Back Meadows or Kinuseo Falls. Back Meadow is a large high meadow with play and picnic area. A favourite area for groups to test their machines. Access trail (from Five Cabin Creek) can be difficult and requires at least intermediate skills to traverse. The deceiving size of the area has resulted in riders getting lost. Access, snowfall and terrain variety earns this areas a **High** suitability.
Pinnacle Peak, Mt. Crum, Pyramid Peak , Albright Ridge, Imperial Creek	General Description: Extensive alpine area with rolling alpine, cirques, bowls. Comments: These areas have suitable snowfall and terrain for a high but due to the difficulty of access the areas are reduced to a **Medium**
Warner Lake Trail	General Description: Spectacular and unique mountain scenery. Fossilized coral. Fossil Fish Lake. Red Deer Falls. Red Deer Canyon. Old log cabins. Comments: Extensive system linked to the FSR. The trail to the falls is 14 km then extends another 20 km to Warner Lakes. There are numerous exploration trails that lead to old log cabins, creeks and lakes. These areas have suitable snowfall and terrain for a high but due to the difficulty of access and the distance to the communities of the Dawson Creek Forest District the area is reduced to a **Medium**
Red Deer / Whatley Area	General Description: Extensive alpine area with rolling alpine, cirques, bowls. Comments: These areas have suitable snowfall and terrain for a high but due to the difficulty of access and the distance to the communities of the Dawson Creek Forest District the area is reduced to a **Medium**.
Dawson Creek	
Mt. Puggins, Dawson Creek and Paradise Valley	General Description: Extensive trail and road network that link Dawson Creek to Tumbler Ridge, One Island Lake. Rolling and flat terrain. Comments: Includes the Paradise Valley trail, a network of snowmobile trails that extend from north of Bear Mountain south along the Kiskatinaw River, the Salt Ridge trail follows the seismic lines along Salt Ridge and connects with the Paradise Valley trail network. Suitable for all beginner skill levels. The lack of challenges and monotony of the landscape reduces the suitability to **Medium** Consideration: Remote sections.
Septimus Trail	General Description: A trail network north of Dawson Creek suitable for family outings. Comments: Endless trail combinations. Suitable for all beginner skill levels. The lack of challenges and monotony of the landscape reduces the suitability to **Medium** Consideration: Caution is stressed to newcomers on the ease of becoming lost.

- ***Market and Socio-economic Assessment***

Markets - The snowmobile market is evenly distributed amongst age groups, with a significant portion 35 and over (60.1%). Almost three quarters are male and half travel with friends. While the median age is 41, many younger people are being introduced into the activity through family outings. While the activity has traditionally been male-dominated, there are an increasing number of women, couples, retirees and families participating associated with the general increase in the soft adventure market.

Snowmobiling is growing extremely fast, perhaps more so than any other outdoor activity, motorized or non-motorized. The increased demand and use is coming from residents, regional visitors and short-haul visitors. In the Dawson Creek Forest District, most visiting snowmobilers are from Alberta, and based on the available market information, the best future opportunities will be with this target group. However, this market is self-guided and is not likely to be a major purchaser of guiding services. The majority have their own equipment and gas, food and accommodation services when they visit the region.

Competition is not that significant in the region, as most snowmobilers are self-guided. A new operator offering guiding services would have to stimulate demand either by bringing in new visitors, or converting existing visitors to buyers of value-added services.

Impacts/Conflicts - Land use and resource management is a major issue for snowmobiling, particularly where competing use pressures are high. While this is not a major factor in the study area at this time, snowmobilings rising popularity may create use pressures in the future. Land/resource managers can provide some assistance for resolving conflicts, with changes in legislation and policy, but there are really no mechanisms for forcing commercial operators (tenured and untenured), resident snowmobilers and unguided visiting snowmobilers to keep out of each others' way. Solutions are most likely to be worked out amongst the user groups themselves.

The LRMP has outlined some concerns about motorized winter recreation with some potential for access restriction. Other, province-wide environmental initiatives (e.g. caribou habitat management), could have the same affect.

Business Development– Critical needs in the region include accommodation (Tumbler Ridge and Hudson's Hope), trail infrastructure (all communities), event development (all communities), and local land use planning (Dunlevy subzone in Hudson's Hope). Tenure is not a critical issue because the amount of commercial guiding is low. Nearby accommodation, particularly if it provides direct access to trails, is a great advantage for capturing snowmobile business. Quality après snowmobile activities are a growing requirement for destination snowmobilers. In addition, adequate and secure parking is a requirement as expensive tow vehicles and trailers are left for long periods of time. Warm-up huts and cabins are a bonus for day riders and a requirement for multi-day hut-to-hut tours. Good signage is important for both convenience and safety reasons. An operations base is needed for repairs and maintenance. Fuel storage is another important requirement, both at the operations base and remote fueling locations. Tour operators will need trailers and tow vehicles for hauling to and from trailheads.

Avalanches, inclement weather, clouds and resulting loss of visibility are hazards that are increasing in profile as sledders continue to push the limits advanced by technology. As the areas considered suitable for snowmobiling expand in the backcountry, there is a corresponding increase in danger related to natural occurrences such as avalanches. Only 5 to 15 percent of snowmobile incidents occur on well-maintained, designated trails where 80 to 90 percent of snowmobiling takes place.[19] Operators have to be cognizant of their safety procedures and liability protection.

Conclusions - Snowmobile development in the region has some good potential, primarily amongst the Alberta-based regional market. However, this market is self-guided and is not a purchaser of guiding services. Communities can build on past successes by creating more infrastructure and services aimed at attracting more of the regional market in Alberta. In particular, Tumbler Ridge and Chetwynd can be made to be very attractive to Albertans with development of destination lodges.

Snowmobiling is often seen as having significant negative affects on the backcountry in terms of conflicts with other users and the environment. Regulation and designation of areas and routes may occur in the future and limit development, but this should not be an issue in the near-term as use conflicts are low.

RESOURCE CRITERIA				
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**	**Dawson Creek**
Uniqueness of Key Features	Play areas	High	High	Low
	Optimal Geography	High	High	Low
	Snow Conditions	High	High	Medium
Supportive Resources	Groomed Trails	High	Medium	High
	Variety of experiences	High	Medium	Low
	Circuits	High	Medium	Medium
Environmental Considerations		Medium	High	Low
Supportive infrastructure		Medium	Low	Medium
Associated products		Destination lodges, huts, downhill skiing		
Significance of associated products		High	Medium	Low
Access to staging areas		High	High	High
Access from staging area to resources		High	Medium	Medium
Prime season		Winter	Winter	Winter
Discussion		▸ Tumbler Ridge with ready access to optimum trails, open ridges and play areas is popular. Avalanche hazards are also less of a problem than the other popular areas in the Pine Pass.	▸ Highly popular areas accessible from Highway 97. Avalanche prone.	▸ Extensive trail network through Salt Ridge and extending to Tumbler Ridge.

---

[19] "Snowmobiling Safety", Snowmobiling American Council of Snowmobile Associations website.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA				
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**	**Dawson Creek**
Markets	Demand	Medium-High	Medium-High	Medium
	Competition	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Overall potential	High	High	Medium
Impact/ Conflict	Use	Medium	Medium	Low
	Social	Medium	Medium	Medium
Business Development Needs	Crown tenure	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Infrastructure	High	High	High
	Capital	High	High	High
Level of community support		Medium	Medium	Medium
Employment opportunities		Medium	Medium	Low
	Opportunities	▸ Snowmobiling (guided/unguided) ▸ Event development ▸ Accommodation	▸ Snowmobiling (guided/unguided) ▸ Event development ▸ Trail development (e.g. Dunlevy)	▸ Snowmobiling (guided/unguided) ▸ Event development (e.g. snowcross)
Development Considerations	Regional	▸ The BC Snowmobile Federation BCSF has been negotiating with the Land Use Coordination Office (LUCO) for a provincial trail network, changes to improve safety for snowmobilers, changes to make it easier for snowmobilers to operate legally (e.g. crossing highways) and changes to allow local interests to secure and maintain snowmobile trails. Legislative and policy changes are now being discussed with LUCO. ▸ BCSF has been lobbying heavily to prevent restricted access owing to last year's red listing of mountain caribou in BC. ▸ The LRMP states that winter recreation (e.g., snowmobile use) may be restricted in some areas, and motorized activities will not be allowed in the Klin-se-za Goal 2 Protected Area and is likely to be constrained in Protected Areas, Special Management (excepting Major River Corridors) RMZs, and the East Slopes RMZ.		
	Local	▸ Loss of accommodation from mine closure limits near-term potential. ▸ Variability of terrain appeals to a broad range of users and markets.	▸ There is potential for user conflict in the Dunlevy subzone which may see concentrated use and development in the future.	▸ Lack of hill-climbing and challenging terrain will limit development. ▸ Good signed trail system south of Dawson Creek. ▸ Trail system provides links to Tumbler Ridge resources. ▸ Cold, dry conditions offsets low snowfalls.

- ***High Opportunity Areas***

Polygon Number	Description of Polygon
1	Little Boulder
2	Mt West
3	LeMoray
4	Brazion / Hasler
5	Howling Wolves Peak
6	Mount Spieker/ Reesor Ridge Area
7	Babcock / Core / Quintette Area

5.6.5 Nordic Skiing/Ski Touring

Nordic and ski touring are related winter sports where the participants use skis which are "free-heeled", that is where bindings are not attached at the heel as they are on alpine ski bindings.

Nordic skiing is typically undertaken as a day-use activity on a compressed base of open snow or on broken trails with machine-set tracks for the skis to travel on. Settings are generally frontcountry areas near urban centres or destination resorts. Loops of varying distance increments and difficulty are important for this product to be successfully implemented. The activity is well suited to families as equipment is relatively inexpensive and skill levels and fitness requirements are minimal. The activity is well suited for unguided participation from a central base. Nordic skiing is identified as cross-country skiing, undertaken on trails that are groomed for skating (wide compressed corridor) or classic skiing (parallel tracks for skis).

Light-touring is a form of Nordic and ski touring that usually involves creating one's own tracks using a medium width ski on excursions of less than one day. This includes canyon skiing, an activity that takes place over frozen and snowed over creeks oftentimes within canyons.

Ski touring involves single or multi-day excursions into the "backcountry" (usually on skins), climbing to the alpine or sub-alpine and skiing the bowls, rolling ridges or areas between the trees. Climbing nearby summits (known as ski mountaineering) and traversing ice fields are also important components of this activity. For backcountry skiing, a premium is placed on pristine wilderness and lack of motorized vehicles.

Both light touring and backcountry ski touring can involve telemark skiing – free-heeled downhill skiing.

- ***Regional Overview***

Strengths	Quick access to open alpine. Quality scenic features. Relatively long season (5-6 months). Dry snow conditions. Loop trail networks in place near towns.
Weaknesses	Area is not known as a ski touring destination. Limited locations (lack of diversity). Limited development and infrastructure to support activity. Variable winter road conditions to many backcountry trailheads. Medium to high avalanche hazards.
Concerns	Lack of public sector funding to develop and maintain trails. Potential competition/conflicts with snowmobile use areas.

- ***Resource Assessment***

Overview -

Downhill (or alpine) skiing- the snow conditions, remote setting and the existing facility at Powder King limit the viability of this product in the study area. Heli-skiing and snowcat skiing require areas with high snowfall far from any road access. The capabilities here are limited in the study area and the skiable vertical relief is not as great as in established operations in southern BC. The most suitable skiing opportunities are with Nordic skiing and ski touring. Easy access to alpine, existing trails, canyon skiing, winter features such as frozen waterfalls all lend to the Nordic and light touring opportunities. The mountains surrounding the western communities with their rolling alpine ridges and bowls provide opportunities for backcountry ski touring.

Cross Country Skiing - Cross country skiing requires the infrastructure and maintained grooming. It is generally associated with clubs and communities. Existing areas include:

Tumbler Ridge - Kakwa Unit

- Wolverine Trails - located in Tumbler Ridge. Consists of 10 km of groomed trails that are trackset for classic and skating. The trails lead off the golf course through the woods to the Lost Haven cabin, an excellent place to warm up by the wood stove. The annual Ridge Ramble ski race is held in February on these trails. An ungroomed loop goes further to Lost Haven Ski Cabin, with a panoramic view of the Murray River Valley.
- Gwillim Lake- Ungroomed, marked trails. Run by Southeast School District.

Dawson Creek Unit

- Bear Mountain Ski Trails these are groomed and the tracks are set. It is located within the Community Forest outside of Dawson Creek. There are 3 warming huts including the O'Reilly cabin.

Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope Unit

- Cameron Lake Ski Trails - Track set trails. Run by the outdoor school run by the Northeast School District.

Albright Ridge **Photo: BC Forest Service**

Canyon skiing - The many creeks and small rivers in the region (with a focus on Tumbler Ridge) provide *light touring* opportunities.

Another popular activity is skiing up local creeks, usually with a waterfall or canyon as the destination. Flatbed Creek is less than five minutes out of town, and there is usually a broken trail up it. Many other creeks in the area, such as Bullmoose, Waterfall, M20, and Tentfire, offer great skiing (Tumbler Ridge Website)

Tumbler Ridge - Kakwa Unit

- M20 Creek Ski - 2 km creek ski to waterfall.
- Perry Creek - 10 km ski through attractive canyon.
- Bullmoose Creek - a popular creek ski near town up 18 km return includes Horseshoe Falls.
- Flatbed Falls - a pleasant ski to the falls.
- Babcock Creek to the upper and lower falls.

Ski Touring - There is an overlap in areas suitable for backcountry skiing and snowmobiling. Most backcountry skiers avoid areas of high snowmobile use because of noise and tracks, so they are apt to use areas that are less frequented by snowmobilers. Some of the best skiing is in the spring, after most snowmobilers have stopped using the areas, thereby minimizing conflicts.

> Many of the summer hiking destinations become great ski touring once the snow flies. Large alpine areas provide a variety of experiences, from easy tours to rugged ski mountaineering. Spring is the best time for tours, with longer days and settled corn snow. The knowledge and equipment to travel safely in avalanche terrain is essential. (TR Website)

Light and Backcountry Touring - These are locations that can be readily accessed from the population centres and are moderately difficult or technical. Winter road conditions and presence of snowmobiles are potential limitations.

Backcountry Ski Touring - Listed below are locations that require an advanced skill level and that require the possibility of a multi-day excursion.

Hudson's Hope / Chetwynd	
Butler / Aylard Ridge	Setting: Backcountry General Description: Forests to spectacular alpine scenery. Unique rock formations. Comments: Butler Ridge is a provincial park. On Butler Ridge there is a 24-km trail into alpine that ends at Chinaman Lake. Motorized use is discouraged in the Park but there are opportunities with Aylard. The limited snowmobiling in the area, the open country and the ready access elevates the suitability to a **High**.
Bickford Mountain Trail	Setting: Mid-country General Description: off Highway 97, 70 km from Chetwynd, you can park your vehicle and begin a hike on marked trail to Bickford Mountain Comments: This 15 km trip is steep and may be difficult. Climb to 5,000 feet and explore the bowls and meadows. There may be snowmobiles but the limited alpine may encourage them to go to other more expansive areas. The access, suitable terrain, and limited snowmobiling elevates the suitability to a **High.**
Little Boulder	Setting: Backcountry General Description: Extensive alpine area with rolling alpine, cirques and bowls. Comments: The optimum terrain, snow and easy access up the Silver Sand road earns this area a high but the popularity of the area for snowmobiles reduces it to **Medium** suitability. Consideration: Avalanche.
LeMoray	Setting: Backcountry General Description: Extensive alpine area with rolling alpine, cirques and bowls. Comments: Access, snowfall, terrain variety and the potential agreement that there may not be motorized use within this protected area earns this area a **High** suitability. Access is along the Hasler FSR. Consideration: Avalanche, remoteness.
Howling Wolves	Setting: Backcountry General Description: Extensive alpine area with rolling alpine, cirques and bowls. Comments: Snowfall and terrain variety earns this area a high suitability although access and the presence of snowmobiles reduces suitability to **Medium.** Consideration: Avalanche, remoteness.
Burnt River / Watson Area	General Description: Extensive alpine area with cirques, bowls and rolling ridges. Comments: Access, snowfall and terrain variety earns this area a high suitability although remoteness reduces the suitability to **Medium**. Consideration: Avalanche, remoteness.
Tumbler Ridge / Kakwa	
Elephant Ridge Area / Gwillim Lake	Setting: Backcountry (Elephant Ridge), Mid-country (Gwillim) General Description: Lake with a link to a rolling sub-alpine area. Comments: The area is suitable for ski touring and is readily accessed. It is not a popular area for snowmobiling. The area has a suitability of **Medium**.

Bullmoose Mountain	Setting: Mid-country General Description: Alpine area with rolling alpine. Comments: The area is suitable for ski touring and is readily accessed. The limited area suitable for snowmobiling may reduce the numbers of participants here thereby increasing the suitability for ski touring to **High.**
Reesor Ridge, Pinnacle Peak / Mt. Crum	Setting: Backcountry General Description: Spectacular subalpine/alpine scenery. Comments: Access road (22 km) to subalpine/alpine (Perry Creek). Opportunities to link to Pinnacle Peak and Mt. Crum ridges. Popular snowmobiling area. The proximity of this area to Tumbler Ridge and the good conditions and terrain for ski touring increases the suitability to **High** with regard for motorized activities.
Pyramid Peak , Albright Ridge, Bat Lake Area, Sukunka Ridge, Shark's Fin Area, Mt. Bulley Area	Setting: Backcountry General Description: Remote alpine areas with rolling alpine, cirques, bowls and good snow conditions. Comments: These areas have suitable snowfall and terrain for a high but due to the difficulty of access the areas are reduced to a **Medium**. Access is largely relegated to fly-in.
Kinuseo Falls / Monkman Pass	General Description: Spectacular scenery from valley of adjoining ridges. Comments: Easy access to trail system from Kinuseo Falls on a backcountry trail along the Murray River onto the Monkman Lake Trail to Monkman Lake. Trail totals 24-km to Monkman Lake. The solitude, ease of access and good snow conditions increases the suitability to **High**.
Wapiti - Onion Hiking Trail	Setting: Backcountry General Description: Spectacular mountain scenery, Wapiti, Onion and smaller lakes. Wapiti River. Backcountry touring. Presence of hut on Wapiti Lake. Comments: This is an outstanding area made more suitable for backcountry skiing by the park status and by the presence of a hut. Snowmobiles may enter the area but considering the terrain, hut and scenery this areas suitability is **High**.
Warner Lake Trail	Setting: Backcountry General Description: Spectacular and unique mountain scenery. Fossilized coral. Fossil Fish Lake. Red Deer Falls. Red Deer Canyon. Old log cabins. Comments: Extensive system linked to the FSR. The trail to the falls is 14 km then extends another 20 km to Warner Lakes. There are numerous exploration trails that lead to old log cabins, creeks and lakes. These areas have suitable snowfall and terrain for a high but due to the difficulty of access and the distance to the communities of the Dawson Creek Forest District the area is reduced to a **Medium**.

- ***Market and Socio-economic Assessment***

Markets - In Canada, skiing is more likely to be undertaken by women (54%) than men. The fact that 38% of skiers are travelling in a family group also distinguishes it from other activities. The vast majority of participants in BC are residents. Statistics from the US indicate that: 52% of skiers are women, 45% of skiers are age 35-54, 41% of skiers are college educated, and 49% of skiers have household incomes in excess of $50,000(USD). Participation has been increasing amongst senior citizens as the activity has been promoted as an excellent way to enjoy the outdoors and maintain a good level of fitness.

The most popular reasons given for why people ski include: 1) the whole family can participate together, 2) practical fun way to enjoy the outdoors during the winter, 3) social contact with other skiers on the trail and at ski area lodges, 4) ideal cross training sport for running and biking, and 5) weight loss - burns more calories per hour than any other sport.

The market for Nordic skiing is small but growing strongly. It has one of the lowest participation rates among North Americans of all products studied in this report, but future projections for participation are encouraging. In the US, Nordic skiing is projected to have the third highest growth rate in participation, following only sailing and downhill skiing.[20] As skiing technology improves (e.g. touring skis are now more shapely, giving beginners increased performance with less effort for activities like telemarking) and as lift-service options expand, ski touring will become even more accessible to a broader market. If the Dawson Creek Forest District can increase its winter destination profile to regional markets, especially in Alberta, the Nordic skiing product could be an important component in that diversification. The majority of Nordic skiers also participate in other outdoor sports such as hiking, camping and fishing; 25 percent are also alpine skiers.[21] This would suggest some family-oriented opportunities among visitors to Powder King.

---

[20] Outdoor Recreation in America, p 184, Clayne R. Jensen, 1995.

There are several areas in BC and Alberta with quality ski terrain, whether for touring or conventional cross-country. In neighbouring regions such as Alberta, there are dozens of huts within a day's ski from main highways that are popular as multi-day and weekend destinations. The quality of ski touring in the Canadian Rockies is recognized worldwide and this has prompted the national parks to actively promote the activity. For commercial operators, the main challenge is in attracting clientele. The chances of converting self-guided ski tourers to purchasers of services will be very challenging. In addition to the park system, local alpine clubs and societies provide access to over 40 public backcountry huts to ski tourers at little or no cost. Anecdotal evidence suggests capacity is rarely exceeded at these cabins.

Impacts/Conflicts - Resource use conflicts are a possibility for this activity, but low overall use levels in the study area do not suggest problems at this time. The spatial requirements for backcountry skiing are small and in other parts of the province, participants can usually co-exist with heli-skiers and cat-skiers. In general though, snowmobiles and backcountry skiers do not mix well. These two users groups have differing attitudes on use and enjoyment of the natural environment and there is often little common ground on backcountry use.

The existence of other winter commercial tenures can have a negative impact on the amount of terrain available to initiate a ski touring business, but so far this has not been a problem in the Dawson Creek FD. Of more consequence in the Dawson Creek area is the large tracts of private land that limits the access and the placement of infrastructure and services.

Business Development – Infrastructure requirements for ski touring are minimal as the lack of development and access to wilderness is what attracts users in the first place. However, convenience of access and more backcountry accommodation will attract more users. Road access, or in some cases other forms of motorized transportation, to within a reasonable distance of the activity is a critical factor in the success of a ski touring business. Secure vehicle parking at trail heads, access to daily avalanche forecasts, and the availability of backcountry huts and cabins are advantageous for ski tourers who are out for a number of days.

There are major infrastructure requirements for cross-country skiing as access, parking, signage, rentals, hospitality services, hut and fee collection, ski patrol, grooming and off-season trail maintenance all have to be looked after. Still, this has not stopped some cross-country ski areas from being transformed into multi-use, winter playgrounds or resort areas.[22] This is to have a broader market appeal including couples and families. Resorts such as Whistler have seen cross-country ski visitation grow at a faster rate than downhill visits through investments in facilities and services.

---

[21] SnowSports Industries America, 1999.

[22] SkiTrax, p.29, December/Holiday 1999.

Any development of a Nordic centre would require access to Crown tenure to justify the economic costs of development. This way, non-compatible activities can be controlled and restricted. Given that a Nordic centre should be located within a reasonable distance of its market (usually nearby town) the cost and availability of land may be a major issue (e.g. if private lands need to be purchased).

Conclusions - Multi-activity packages will be of interest to avid skiers and destination skiers, as both have a relatively high interest in other outdoor activities.

The ski touring product will be difficult to expand in the study area. The main area of competition is the southern Canadian Rockies (Jasper, Canmore, Banff, Golden, Revelstoke) where the product quality is recognized worldwide and heavily promoted by both the national and provincial park systems. Commercial operators there have difficulty attracting clientele because between the park system and local alpine clubs and societies, there is relatively inexpensive access to over 40 public backcountry huts. The best commercial potential will be for ski touring packaged around lodge and resort development. A ski touring product could be made more accessible through the use of motorized access (snowmobiles, cats, and helicopters).

The cross-country ski product has more potential in the near-term because the regional market is bigger and it is a more family-oriented pursuit. There are already facilities in the communities which could be expanded and enhanced. For communities like Chetwynd, there is some potential to market Nordic skiing to downhill skiers travelling to Powder King. Visitation statistics from Whistler indicate that participation in cross-country skiing is growing at rates comparable to downhill skiing. It is believed that many downhill skiers are responsible for this expansion.

RESOURCE CRITERIA										
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**			**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**			**Dawson Creek**		
		x-ski	**Light**	**Back**	**x-ski**	**Light**	**Back**	**x-ski**	**Light**	**Back**
Uniqueness of Key Features	Setting	High	Medium	Medium-High	High		Low	High	Low	
	Geography	High	High	High	High		High	High	Low	
	Wildlife	Low	Low	Low	Low		Low	Low	Low	
Supportive Resources	Grooming/ Snow Conditions	High	High	Medium	High		Medium	Medium	Medium	
	Trails / Routes	High	High	High	High		High	High	Medium	
	Destination Features	High	High	Medium	High		High	High	Low	
Environmental Considerations		Medium	Low	Low	Low		Low	Low	Low	
Supportive infrastructure (cabins)		High	Low	Low	Low		Low	High	High	
Associated products		Hut System, other winter activities (dog sledding, snowshoeing, etc.), snowmobile access.								
Significance of associated products		Medium	Medium	Medium	High		Low	Medium	Medium	
Access to staging areas		High	High	High	High		High	High	High	
Access from staging area to resources		High	High	Medium	Medium		Medium	High	High	
Prime season		Winter/ Spring	Winter/ Spring	Winter/ Spring	Winter/ spring		Winter/ Spring	Winter/ Spring	Winter/ Spring	
Discussion		▸ The setting is affected by snowmobiling activities that are less evident during the spring. ▸ Roads to trailhead may not be plowed.			▸ The setting is affected by snowmobiling and avalanche hazards. ▸ Suitable alpine setting can be accessed from Hwy 97. ▸ Opportunities can be linked to Powder King.			▸ The opportunities are primarily with the Bear Mountain Ski Trails. Light touring along the Paradise Trails or Salt Ridge are limited due to the lack of features and vistas.		

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA				
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**	**Dawson Creek**
Markets	Demand	Low	Low	Low
	Competition	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Overall potential	Medium	Medium	Medium
Impact/ Conflict	Use	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Community/Social	Low	Low	Low
Business Development Needs	Crown tenure	Low	Low	Low
	Infrastructure	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Capital	Medium-High	Medium-High	Medium-High
Level of community support		High	Medium	Medium
Employment opportunities		Low	Low	Low
Opportunities		▸ Nordic skiing ▸ Ski touring ▸ Linkages to hut and lodges ▸ Development of a Nordic centre	▸ Possible ski tour access by snowmobile ▸ Development of a Nordic centre ▸ Good opportunity to market to Powder King visitors.	▸ Classic X Country ▸ Multi-activity packages linked to dog sledding and snow shoeing
Development Considerations	Regional	▸ Attractive scenery, lakes, wildlife viewing opportunities etc.; all add equally to the capability of an area. ▸ Terrain and resource attributes can vary widely; success is closely associated with how the operator or the community provides the service. ▸ Good terrain is likely to be valued by snowmobilers and could therefore face competitive use pressures. ▸ Ski touring may be associated with a hut or lodge-based operations. ▸ Climatic constraints include rapidly changing alpine conditions. ▸ Seismic trails are often used for Nordic skiing.		
	Local	▸ Extended trips to Mt. Spieker and Bullmoose Mountain, perhaps in conjunction with hut development could be developed. ▸ Distance from staging area may necessitate motorized forms of transport such as snowmobiles or ski plane.	▸ Further development at Dinosaur Heights to include power line right-of-way would take advantage of existing groomed trails and infrastructures.	▸ Although there has been little market development, expansion of facilities at Bear Mountain could be undertaken. ▸ The lower elevations and low snowfall will limit the areas suitable for this activity.

- ***High Opportunity Areas***

Polygon Number	Description of Polygon
1	Butler / Aylard Ridges
2	Mt Bickford
3	LeMoray
4	Bullmoose Mt Area
5	Mt Spieker Area
6	Reesor Ridge
7	Monkman Lake trail
8	Wapiti / Onion Area

5.6.6 Road Touring

This activity focuses on driving and sightseeing, both on highway and in cities/towns. While primarily self-guided, guided bus and motorcoach tours are also considered. Sightseeing is an activity very closely associated with automobile touring. There are opportunities for touring on gravel secondary roads. Comfortable and safety equipped large Sport Utility Vehicles are a preferred mode of transport.

Road tours require high scenic values and corresponding viewpoints and points of interest. Road tours can be linear or circle, or be part of other tours such as a water cruise and rail tour. They are ideal for those individuals seeking an adventure in safety and comfort and for those who do not choose or are unable to take their own vehicles.

- ***Regional Overview***

Strengths	Alaska Highway. Loop and circuit tour opportunities. Tourism industry is oriented toward rubber-tire trade. Dispersed communities and highway network allow for circuit and corridor development. Potential for roads to handle increased tourist traffic. Good gateway signage and informational signage.
Weaknesses	Few road side attractions. Lack of themed development in some of the high potential tourism areas. Industrial traffic.
Concerns	Quality of the infrastructure. Scenic management of timber harvesting. Waning interest in the Alaska Highway as an experience itself (as opposed to being simply a route to Alaska). Deactivation of secondary gravel roads.

- ***Resource Assessment***

Dawson Creek is Mile 0 or the start of the Alaskan Highway. This highway runs through the vast northern expanse of British Columbia for approximately 1,000 kilometres before reaching the Yukon boundary. Recreational vehicles, many from the lower States, make this journey and the benefits to Dawson Creek are notable.

The Alaskan highway does not have a provision for a loop to return south until it reaches the Yukon Boundary when it links with Highway 37 and returns south to the northwest cities of Terrace and Smithers. The last loop in the northeast links the communities of Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Hudson's Hope and Chetwynd to Highway 29 and the larger regional loop that links Prince George to Grand Prairie and Edmonton. These loops provide opportunities for these communities to promote the opportunity for travellers to sample the north without committing to a lengthy journey.

The history of the Peace River and region provides the opportunity for historical theme tours both on land and along the Peace River. The agricultural expanse of Dawson Creek allows for agricultural theme tours. The Peace River dams offer industrial theme tours. The fossils discoveries along the Peace River offers the chance for tourists to witness the prehistory of the land. Wildlife along the road is an unexpected but favourable attraction.

Paved Road Tours - Highway 97 to the Pine Pass offers tremendous views of the Pine Valley as it climbs into the Northern Rockies. Highway 29 to Tumbler Ridge provides views of the northern forests, rolling ridges and jagged peaks typical of the region.

Primary Road Circuits - The Regional Loop tour links Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Hudson's Hope and Chetwynd. The tour provides historical, industrial, wildlife and agricultural themes (Highways 29 and 97).

Kinuseo Falls Dawson Creek Circle Tour - Dawson Creek , Tumbler Ridge, Kinuseo Falls, Chetwynd to Dawson Creek. This tour features the waterfall as the destination with stop-offs along the way.

The Triangle Tour offers agricultural and historical themes, including:

- the Kiskatinaw River bridge, the only curved and backed trestled bridge in all of western Canada. When it was built in 1943 it was the first of it's kind in Canada. It is reputed to be the longest of it's kind in the world.
- The Stopping Place (old sleigh trail went from Fort St. John/Dawson Creek).
- Hutterite Colony.
- Van Han Apiaries.

Kinuseo Falls **Photo: BC Parks**

Gravel Road Tours - Close to Tumbler Ridge, the Sukunka Valley, Bullmoose Creek/Windfall Creek, Wolverine Valley, Kinuseo Falls, and Wapiti/Red Deer/Belcourt roads are all suitable. A number of roads provide access to the alpine (and can be marketed as a major strength of road touring), these include Quintette Mountain, Hermann Mountain and Mt Spieker. The Hasler Creek road (in the Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope Unit) leaves Highway 97 and heads toward the subalpine.

Road and Boat Link Tours - The Hudson's Hope – Taylor – Peace River loop offers historical, industrial, wildlife and recreational themes with impressive scenery. From Tumbler Ridge, the Forest Service road along the upper Murray to Kinuseo Falls can link with the jet boat back to Tumbler Ridge.

- ***Market and Socio-economic Assessment***

Markets – Road touring focuses on driving and sightseeing, on highways and major roads and in cities/towns. While this type of touring is primarily self-guided, guided bus and motorcoach tours are also part of the market. In the US and Canada over half of the total population reportedly participates in sightseeing, and participation rates have been growing. Short-haul and regional markets are primarily travelling in personal vehicles while long-haul visitors are more likely to visit sightseeing attractions and to spend a greater proportion of their money on packaged tours.

In general, the further a tourist had to come to get to BC, the more likely sightseeing was the primary purpose of their trip. Visitors from Europe, long-haul US and Eastern Canada are also more likely to visit sightseeing attractions and to spend a greater proportion of their money on packaged tours. Since many of these tours are offered with bus or motorcoach as transportation, it follows that the long-haul US and European visitors are also more likely to use buses for transportation. By far the majority of visitors use car or motorcycle for transportation while in BC, suggesting that most visitors take self-guided sightseeing trips.

As mentioned above, the further travellers have come from, the more likely they are to participate in a guided, packaged tour. These travellers value the knowledge of the area by the tour company and the convenience of being able to see all of the major sights without significant planning. Packaged tour travellers are willing to pay for the convenience of having most of their sightseeing, transportation, accommodation and food arranged for them. Independent travellers value the flexibility and privacy of travelling on their own according to their own schedule. They may have planned a detailed itinerary before arrival, or plan their trip along the way, enabling them to experience certain venues for longer periods of time (perhaps with unplanned overnight stays).

Visitation to the region by highway travellers has not reached the levels experienced in the early 1990s when the anniversary celebrations were happening. A decline in the traditional camping market, continued competition from Highway 16-37 and the long-term decline in the number of US travellers who view the Alaska Highway as a destination have all contributed to the decline. Future growth in visitation may not be the result of these traditional demand generators and may be linked to new sources.

Competition for the automobile touring market remains intense. Other regions in the province, Alberta, Yukon and Alaska have targeted the Alaska Highway visitor with attraction programs. Still, many highway visitors to the region could be attracted to spend more time and money locally, or are actively looking for something to do but have been unable to find an experience to meet their expectations. The tourism industry is well-positioned to provide more and better services to these markets. It has been a focus of tourism activity since the Alaska Highway was constructed and operators are familiar with market needs and potential.

Impacts/Conflicts – The 2x2 product is oriented toward highway markets and front-country facilities, so its access and use of the backcountry is minimal compared to other outdoor products. Still, issues such as preserving quality visual landscapes and vistas, participation in land use planning and relations with forest companies are considered important to the future development of the sector.[23]

Business Development - Government tenure is not an issue, but government-controlled infrastructure is critical to future development. This involves mainly highway signage and road conditions, both of which need significant upgrading so visitors are presented with more touring options. Circle tour and themed routing could be further developed and marketed.

While infrastructure development is important for this market, communities and operators also need to be aware of the need to act in a way that conserves and protects the area for sustainable development. There is a need to encourage input from various parties and develop a cohesive strategy for tourism along the touring route. This happened during Project '92 (50th Anniversary Alaska Highway Celebration) but needs to be reinforced on an ongoing basis.

---

[23] TREK International Inc., 2000, COTA Membership Survey Results: Land Use Issues October/November 2000, Council of Tourism Associations of BC.

Conclusions - All two wheel drive roads in the Dawson Creek District can handle increased tourist traffic. Packaging bus and van tours with the other amenities in the region is one key to increasing opportunities in this sector. Combining a road tour with a marine tour can be developed to enhance the nature and heritage interpretation of the Peace River. Tours which provide linkages to other activities (heritage viewing or scenic viewing) could increase usage. Loop tours linking features in the forest district with those outside the district could enhance the potential of the touring product. The region should promote the fact that for northbound travellers, there are no further loop or circle tour opportunities on the highway.

The key to unlocking the potential of this market is to develop along four key dimensions, including staging areas, attractions, services and tour corridors. Because the primary mode of transportation is RVs and cars, the key to getting travellers to explore more corridors in the region is to link together staging areas, services and attractions into themed units. Key themes include exploration (Fraser and Mackenzie), nature (wildlife, other natural features such as waterfalls), industry (dams, mines) and history/heritage (First Nations interpretation, Alaska Highway, Mile "O").

RESOURCE CRITERIA								
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**			**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**			**Dawson Creek**
		Paved	**Rough**	**Link**	**Paved**	**Rough**	**Link**	**Paved**
Uniqueness of Key Features	Variety	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	Medium
	Geography	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	Medium
	Wildlife	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Low
Supportive Resources	Scenic Values	High	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Number of roads	Low	High	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium
	Significant features	Low	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
Environmental Considerations		Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Low
Supportive infrastructure		High	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	High
Associated products		Motorized water, day hikes, lodges. Culture / Heritage, Nature Observation						
Significance of associated products		Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High	Low
Access to staging areas		High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Access from staging area to resources		High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Prime season		Sum-fall	Sum-fall	Sum-fall	Sum-fall	Sum-fall	Sum-fall	Sum-fall
Discussion		▶ Paved road tours are associated with Highway 29 to Tumbler Ridge. ▶ Rough road tours are associated with the Sukunka Valley, Bullmoose Creek/Windfall Creek, Wolverine Valley, Kinuseo Falls, and Wapiti/Red Deer/Belcourt, Quintette Mountain, Hermann Mountain and Mt Spieker (the latter providing access to the alpine) Road to Monkman. ▶ Link tours are associated with the FS road to Kinuseo Falls and by boat down the upper Murray to Tumbler Ridge.			▶ Paved road tours focus on the 1) Dawson Creek- Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope-Fort St. John-Dawson Creek Circuit. 2) Tremendous scenic variety and wildlife. 3) Rough road tours can include a trip up the Hasler to the subalpine. 4) Link tours can link a boat trip along the Peace River from Taylor to Hudson's Hope and a road tour that provides the land transport.			▶ Dawson Creek is the start of the Alaska Highway and also has many rural roads. The Triangle tour provides a loop that can be linked to agricultural interpretation

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA				
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**	**Dawson Creek**
Markets	Demand	Low	Medium	Medium-High
	Competition	High	High	High
	Overall potential	Medium	Medium	Medium-High
Impact/ Conflict	Use	Low	Low	Low
	Community/Social	Low	Low	Low
Business Development Needs	Crown tenure	Low	Low	Low
	Infrastructure	High	High	High
	Capital	High	High	High
Level of community support		High	High	High
Employment opportunities		Medium	Medium	Medium
Opportunities		▶ Themed tours (exploration, industrial and nature viewing) ▶ Highway 29 tour circuit ▶ Rough road tours (Sukunka, Bullmoose, Wolverine, Quintette, Wapiti) ▶ Expanded staging area for Monkman Park	▶ Themed tours (industrial, nature viewing) ▶ Highway 29 and 97 loop or circuit tours ▶ Rough road tours (Hasler)	▶ Themed tours (agri-tourism, historical-heritage) ▶ Destination attractions (interpretive centre) ▶ Circuit tour to Kinuseo Falls
Development Considerations	Regional	▶ Enhancing appeal to the highway traveller will require communities to develop along four dimensions – staging areas, attractions, services and tour corridors. ▶ In order to compete in the tourist market regionally and worldwide, communities in the Peace region will need to find ways to coordinate their development and marketing efforts that emphasize an area's distinctive features in order to draw tourists. ▶ Tourists should be able to develop self-guided tours – communities therefore must emphasize the promotion and development of theme touring to support self-guiding. ▶ As government debt is brought under control, there will be an increasing opportunity to obtain funding for key infrastructure improvements, including highway development and improvement projects that could increase tourism in a region. As a source of significant oil and gas revenues to the provincial treasury, the Peace should be advocating itself for priority spending by the province.		
	Local	▶ As Tumbler Ridge has excellent access to high quality natural features, linking highway travellers to complementary day-use products like hiking, boating and trail riding would be a logical marketing tool.	▶ The main built attractions relate to the forest and energy industries. WAC Bennett dam is a major attractant and could be further marketed. ▶ Enhanced services in HH, especially accommodation would encourage more traffic.	▶ Mile "O" acts as a major attractant for the highway traveller. ▶ Establishing the proposed interpretive centre would add to the attraction base.

- ***High Opportunity Areas***

Polygon Number	Description of Polygon
1	Regional Loop Tour (Hudson's Hope/Chetwynd/Dawson Creek/ Fort St. John)
2	Kinuseo Falls - Dawson Creek Circle Tour

5.6.7 Nature Observation/Heritage Interpretation

The viewing of heritage, culture, wildlife and nature in general are principal components of ecotourism (low impact, non-consumptive tourism). As growth of the ecotourism industry continues, the region can benefit through increased marketing of its significant assets and developing further infrastructure that meets the demand for a range of products, from rustic to full-service. The Peace region has potential for nature and heritage observation and linked to heritage is industrial interpretation. Mining and energy development have had a significant impact on the evolution of natural history in recent times and the interpretive opportunities will be discussed in this section.

- ***Regional Overview***

Strengths	Varied cultural, historical, industrial and natural features, some of provincial and national significance. Features are dispersed throughout the region.
Weaknesses	Unreliability of wildlife sightings. Limited cultural and historical interpretation. Lack of packaging into outdoor products. Lack of linkages between communities.
Concerns	Potential dam development. Use of Crown Corporation land.

- ***Resource Assessment***

The study falls primarily within the northern Rockies and the Interior Plains, which are sparsely populated with the exception of the fertile Peace River district. Farming and ranching are extensive. Oil and natural-gas fields have been developed. Mining and forestry has seen tremendous activity and the demand for hydroelectric power inspired the development of the W.A.C Bennett Dam and the Williston Lake reservoir, the largest man-made lake in British Columbia. Meanwhile, the region has good wilderness scenery and high numbers of wildlife.

The Peace River borders the northern boundaries of the Region. The *Dawson Creek Unit* is predominantly farming and ranching with low elevation forest to the south. The *Tumbler Ridge / Kakwa Unit* is mountainous and many sections are remote. Mining has been a significant industry and interpretive opportunities are available. The *Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope Unit* includes ridges of the Northern Rockies and associated ranges. Williston Lake and the W.A.C Bennett Dam provide interpretive opportunities.

Nature - Nature observation in the *Dawson Creek Unit* is focused on the Crown lands along the Peace and Pine Rivers and large marshy sections to the south. Wildlife such as moose, whitetail and mule deer are common throughout although there are no specific areas for viewing. The Peace River is a major flyway for many species including swans and eagles. In a controlled setting the Sewell Valley Game Farm provides an opportunity for viewing a variety of captive wild animals. The Bear Mountain Community Forest offers interpretive opportunities complete with trails and signage. The Peace River with it's history, landscape and wildlife earn it a **High** suitability.

The *Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope Unit* is noted for the high numbers of wildlife that find suitable habitat in the mixed forest and open meadow habitat common throughout. Of note is Butler / Aylard ridges and Dunlevy Creek, recognized for impressive numbers of deer, elk and raptors including the Golden Eagle. Some Stone Sheep can also be viewed. With these exceptions, there are no areas where wildlife can be consistently and subtly observed. This area has a **High** suitability for nature observation.

There is an interpretive trail within the Chetwynd Community Forest that provides interpretation of the forest, it's harvesting and it's regrowth.

Caves in the area include those around the Bocock Area. Suitable for technical caving with deep holes. These are young caves with small stalactite and stalagmite formations.

The moss gardens in the Dunlevy Area near Hudson's Hope have interpretive potential for enhancing hiking and other viewing activities.

Monkman Park Photo: BC Parks

The *Tumbler Ridge / Kakwa Unit* has great diversity and many significant features. Monkman Provincial Park and Wapiti Lake Protected Area are some of the better known natural wonders but there are numerous other features such as rolling sub-alpine, waterfalls, rivers and wildlife that provide opportunities for nature observation. One of the features - Kinuseo Falls, is a 60 metre waterfall noted as being even higher than the Niagara Falls. Access from Tumbler Ridge offering interpretation is by jet boat or vehicle. Stone Corral has a 4km interpretive trail with caving potential, historical interpretation and other natural features, including fossils, rocks, plants and animal life. Tumbler Ridge is promoting opportunities for nature interpretation with development of the Murray Canyon Overlook and Stone Corral trails coupled with interpretive guidebooks. The TR Point Bird Sanctuary Trail is a 3.5-kilometre trail that leads from Tumbler Ridge to Flatbed Creek and provides an opportunity to view the more than 170 species of eastern and western birds that have been identified in the vicinity. These include 8 species of owl, 7 woodpeckers and the nesting activities of Trumpeter Swans, Bald Eagles and Golden Eagles. The Bear Hole Protected Area is a 17,000 hectare area on the Alberta Plateau containing critical habitat for trumpeter swans and winter range for low elevation caribou and moose.

There is a small cave near Kinuseo Falls that does not have the features or "decorations" suitable for commercial development.

Prehistory - At Hudson's Hope you can see an 11,600-year-old mammoth tusk, and prehistoric stone tools and artifacts dating back some 10,000 years. Fossils are part of the landscape and were first written about by Sir Alexander Mackenzie in 1793. In 1922 fossilized footprints of seven species of dinosaurs were found . A skeleton of a fossilized plesiosaur was found in 1970 and in 1980 an uncovered ichthyosaur was found to be a new species.

Tumbler Ridge has prehistoric attractions that include dinosaur tracks and fossil oyster beds.

Heritage - First Nations: In 1890, Treaty 8 (covering Saskatchewan's north, Alberta and this part of northeast BC) was signed with Beaver, Cree and Slave people. This was the last treaty signed in BC.

Trade and Settlement: Fur traders began trading with the First Nations' tribes in 1778, with explorer Alexander Mackenzie establishing the first real base. The Hudson Bay Company opened its first trading post at Hudson's Hope in 1805. Gold was found in the Peace River in 1861 and Dawson Creek was on the edge of the huge Klondike Gold Rush Trail in 1898. Trade and commerce were a prevalent theme during these times. Increasingly, farmers and ranchers migrated to the area and today you can trace the history of these settlers in museums at Hudson's Hope, Chetwynd, Mackenzie, Pouce Coupe, Fort Nelson, Dawson Creek and Fort St. John.

Historical Structures: Settlement of the region is relatively recent. Older structures in the region include the log church in Hudson's Hope built in 1938 and still in use today. The Northern Alberta Railway station in Dawson Creek was built in 1931. This was the "end of the street". Today it is the distinctive Station Museum.

The *Alaska Highway* begins in Dawson Creek (Mile 0). The 2, 432-kilometre highway was completed as a war time emergency road in just 8 months in 1942 with the use of over 11,000 American troops and over 16,000 civilians. Since then various stages of improvement have made this an enjoyable trip toward a far northern adventure and a major link between the rich natural resources of Alaska and the Yukon with the lower continent. The Alaska Highway still elicits a lot of interest earning it a **High** suitability.

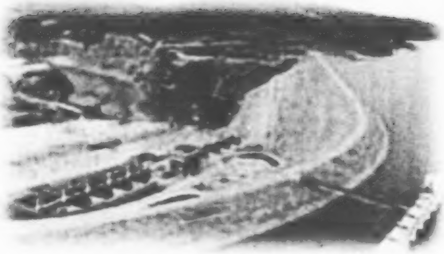
The *Kiskatinaw River bridge* is the only curved and backed trestled bridge in all of western Canada and when built in 1943 was the first of it's kind in Canada. It is reputed to be the longest of it's kind in the world.

In the 1930's, Alex Monkman found a route in what is today *Monkman Pass* (at under 1100 metres, it is the lowest pass in the Rockies). After years of unsuccessful petitioning for a railway, he and fellow volunteers began to build the pass themselves. They completed 130 kilometres of road towards the pass.

Industry - Industrial activities are based on resource extraction and range from mining and forestry to energy production. Major interpretive opportunities are in mining and hydroelectric production.

Mining - Gold was found in the Peace River in 1891. Evidence of this activity is largely obscured. However, modern mining – for coal - has had a significant impact on the region, particularly in Tumbler Ridge. It is uncertain as to whether there will be opportunities for mine tours or land reclamation tours once the mines have been closed. If the mines are to stay open for mine tours and if an interpretation will take place with regards to reclamation, the combination will provide an interesting tour thereby increasing the suitability to **High** for Quintette and Babcock.

Hydroelectric - The W.A.C Bennett Dam is an earth filled dam that holds back the largest man made lake in Canada (Williston Lake). The uniqueness of this dam, and the interpretive centres established by BC Hydro, earns it a **High** suitability for this product.



WAC Bennett Dam **Photo: BC Hydro**

- ***Market and Socio-economic Assessment***

Markets - Nature observers are typically involved in watching, interpreting or photographing flora, geological or other natural resource features. Travellers with a cultural/historical interest are attracted to aboriginal culture as well as colonial and industrial heritage features. Each of these market segments vary in their demographic characteristics. While some data is available on the wildlife viewing and nature observer markets, little is known about cultural/historical travellers.

Nature observers and wildlife viewers tend to be baby boomers in the 35-55 years bracket, evenly distributed between women and men. However, nature observers are more likely to travel solo or be on business than other adventure travellers. Wildlife viewers travel extensively as couples or families.

Among tourism operators, the Canadian market represents approximately half of both the nature observation and wildlife viewing participants. The US is a very important market for these activities as well. In fact, nature observation (51%) and whale watching (30%) are among the activities with the highest percentage of American visitors. The German market is also important to the "Other Wildlife Viewing" segment, primarily through their interest in bear viewing.

BC has good marketability and international renown for wildlife viewing and nature observation but the Dawson Creek Forest District has only niche potential for these products. Although wildlife, especially big game species, are plentiful in the region, viewing is unreliable. Nature observation and heritage interpretation have more promise, but competition within the province is quite extensive. The competition for the cultural/historical participant is also growing. Many communities around the province and indeed North America have been developing their historical/cultural resources. In Alberta, especially, the investment in interpretation infrastructure both in the national parks and other facilities (Tyrell Museum, Frank Slide Interpretive Centre, Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump) has drawn high market volumes.

The future demand for all aspects of this product will continue to grow and evolve as increased infrastructure, interpretation and operator expertise bring new and interesting sub-products to market. Demographic trends, including increasing education levels among travellers and the demand for more learning and participative experiences, will favour communities that have made the investment in facility and product development.

Issues/Conflicts - The issue of wildlife disturbance and habituation is a concern. Where there may be an area with the potential for viewing there is also the potential that the wildlife will be disturbed. Bears may prove to become habituated to the presence of people and loose their apprehension and become fearless. The consequences of any type of wildlife viewing has to be weighed against these factors.

Although you can pick up loose fossils from the surface of Crown lands, excavation in BC requires a permit from Royal BC Museum.

Business Development – Unless it was associated with lodge or resort development, it is unlikely that tenure would be required for this product, and only then if the operator developed his own infrastructure and services. A Licence of Occupation from BCAL for trail or campsite development or park use permit for guiding within park boundaries may be required.

Infrastructure is a very important consideration, either for wildlife viewing or heritage interpretation. For viewing, the requirements will vary depending on the wildlife/natural history viewing activity and the number of visitors. Whether wildlife viewing, nature observation or heritage interpretation, trails, viewing platforms and interpretive signage/displays will improve the visitor experience and create opportunities for further product development.

For wildlife viewing, access, safe and discrete viewing and the reliability of sightings are key components. Shifting populations and the transient nature of some species creates unpredictability in viewing and increases business risk. On the other hand, an unintended disturbance in a reliable viewing areas may also result in the animals leaving the area.

The incorporation of this product into other outdoor products will depend on the availability of interpretative facilities, services and programming (e.g. festivals). This cannot be done inexpensively – there will be significant requirements for capital investments and development of human resources. On the positive side, further development, especially if it is tied to new facilities, has the potential to generate above-average job and income benefits. Linkages between First Nations features (e.g. cultural heritage interpretation at Moberly Lake) and other tourism activities could improve the depth of the product in the study area.

Conclusions - The overall potential for the development of this product in the Dawson Creek District is good, primarily in the areas of heritage interpretation. Higher levels of interpretation and alternate programming will have to be undertaken to expand the appeal to already busy touring travellers. The initiative to undertake the construction of an interpretive centre in Dawson Creek is an example of the type of tourism infrastructure that is needed to increase visitation and spending by creating new products and linkages that will improve the visitor experience. Survey data indicates that educational, experiential and learning trips are a growing attractant for travellers interested in culture and history.[24]

The study area offers some unique opportunities in general nature tours and to a lesser extent, wildlife viewing. Wildlife viewing has potential to offer a complementary experience to other, primary products. Of more interest to travel markets are the viewing opportunities related to other natural resources in the study area, including alpine areas and parks/protected areas.

---

[24] Ecotourism – Nature/Adventure/Culture: Alberta and British Columbia Market Demand Assessment Travel Trade Survey Results, HLA Consultants and The ARA Consulting Group, 1995.

The potential to package nature appreciation with other commercial recreation adventures is one of the best ways to develop unique products. Cooperation and participation by First Nations would be a bonus in the development of this product. Establishing productive partnerships and joint-venturing opportunities will favour success, but it will take time to build these relationships. Tourism BC has signed an accord with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC to help develop and promote aboriginal tourism in the province. The association is also developing an accreditation program to ensure quality standards amongst aboriginal tourism businesses.

RESOURCE CRITERIA										
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**			**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**			**Dawson Creek**		
		Nature	**Prehist**	**Her**	**Nature**	**Prehist**	**Her**	**Nature**	**Prehist**	**Her**
Uniqueness of Key Features	Evidence	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium
	Interpretive Quality	Low	Medium	Low	Low	High	High	Low	Low	Medium
Supportive Resources	Trails/Roads	High	High	High	High	Medium	High	Medium	Low	Medium
	Signs	High	High	High	Low	Low	High	Low	Low	Low
	Feature presence	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	Medium	Low	Low
Environmental Considerations		High	High	Low	High	High	Low	Medium	Low	Low
Supportive infrastructure		Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Low	High
Associated products		Road tours, hiking, boating								
Significance of associated products		High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Access to staging areas		High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Access from staging area to resources		High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Prime season		May-Sept	May-Sept	May-Sept	May-Sept	May-Sept	May-Sept	May-Sept	May-Sept	May-Sept
Discussion		▸ Tumbler Ridge has a nature observation focus. Visible heritage include remnants of the Monkman Pass. Mining activities are within the past two decades. Prehistoric interpretation has potential. ▸ Although they are present, wildlife viewing of mammals is unreliable- there are no viewing sites.			▸ Hudson's Hope has high prehistory interpretation and the essence of early frontier days is evident. Tours of the dam are a daily occurrence. Natural history has promise with Dunlevy. Although they are present, wildlife viewing of mammals is unreliable- there are no viewing sites.			▸ Dawson Creek has historical relationships to settlement and the development of the Alaskan Highway. ▸ Although they are present, wildlife viewing of mammals is unreliable- there are no viewing sites.		

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA				
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**	**Dawson Creek**
Markets	Demand	Medium-High	Medium-High	Medium-High
	Competition	High	High	High
	Overall potential	High	High	High
Impact/ Conflict	Use	High	High	High
	Community/Social	Low	Low	Low
Business Development Needs	Crown tenure	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Infrastructure	High	High	High
	Capital	Medium-High	Medium-High	Medium-High
Level of community support		High	High	High
Employment opportunities		High	High	High
	Opportunities	▸ Historical (mining) theme development ▸ Links between nature observation and other products (e.g. trails and rivers)	▸ Interpretation around Dunlevy ▸ Historical (exploration, dams) theme development	▸ Historical (Alaska Highway, Mile "0", ranching/farming) theme development ▸ Dawson Creek interpretive centre
Development Considerations	Regional	▸ For wildlife viewing, access and reliability of viewing are key components. Shifting populations and the transient nature of some species creates unpredictability in viewing and increases business risk. ▸ The incorporation of this product into other outdoor products will depend on the availability of interpretative facilities, services and programming (e.g. festivals). ▸ Developing partnerships with industrial companies for more tourism interpretation can leverage tourism resources for the region. Museum development by BC Hydro in Hudson's Hope, for example, is a major tourism asset.		
	Local	▸ The remoteness of the area limits access.	▸ Development of Site C would alter access to key historical features on the Peace River. ▸ BC Hydro land use also a key factor	▸ The current initiative to build an interpretive centre in Dawson Creek could provide an impetus for further product development

- ### *High Opportunity Areas*

Polygon Number	Description of Polygon
1	WAC Bennett Dam
2	Butler / Aylard Ridges
3	Peace River
4	Alaska Highway
5	Quintette Mine
6	Bullmoose Mine

5.6.8 Lodge/Resort

A lodge or resort can serve as a regional anchor that can support a variety of regional activities including hiking, mountaineering, fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, snowshoeing, and Nordic skiing. Lodges offer private accommodation through separate quarters or cabins, as opposed to huts, which generally offer shared sleeping quarters. Guests can participate in activities independently or through the services of a guide. The resorts need not directly employ guides but could draw on the services of other local tourism operators with whom they maintain a working relationship.

The lodge/resort product differs from the other products in this analysis in that it is primarily accommodation (facility) based and not activity-based, although linkages to various types of outdoor activities are usually involved. The resort/lodge term is often used loosely and can also refer to motels/hotels whose primary service is accommodation. For this report, lodge/resort is considered a destination type facility with programming and amenities specifically targeted to the outdoor adventure market.

Requirements for access vary from fly-in or boat only (backcountry) to paved road (front-country) depending on the market segment for which the lodge is intended. Lodges can vary from comfortable, high-end accommodation with full amenities to the more rustic. Operations can diversify through offering meeting or conference rooms, allowing clients to mix business with pleasure.

Regardless of style and facility and access considerations, destination lodges require scenic, natural appearing locations without major modifications to the surrounding landscape.

- ***Regional Overview***

Strengths	Geographic diversity provides range of related opportunities. Highway access.
Weaknesses	Distance to major population centres. Small business/convention market. Increasing accessibility and loss of sense of remoteness. Shortage of Crown lands suitable for expansion of tourism industry / infrastructure outside of the ALR (Agricultural Land Reserve). Lack of off-highway infrastructure.
Concerns	Scenic management of the forest land base. Access to Crown land tenure. Land use uncertainties.

- ***Resource Assessment***

The Dawson Creek Forest District offers a wide array of geography from the level Alberta Plateau to the hills that lead to the peaks and ridges of the Northern Rocky Mountains. Long winters provide tremendous snow activities. Summers provide opportunities for hiking and lake and river activities.

Existing Locations - Fort Graham Adventure Vacation in Hudson's Hope offers a 10 person lodge with opportunities for boating, hiking, trail riding, wildlife viewing, gold panning, wilderness training and air tours and charters.

Peace Williston Guide and Outfitters in Hudson's Hope offer remote cabins and 10 person lodge with boating, canoeing, jet boating, hiking, trail riding, wildlife viewing, bird watching, native Moose camp and ATV trips.

Future Opportunities - The Dawson Creek Forest District provides opportunities for Destination Lodges focused on high elevation alpine and subalpine in the mid-country and backcountry lodges, dude ranches and river and lake lodges.

Dawson Creek - Dude Ranches in areas exhibiting natural and rural landscape in the Alberta Uplands near Dawson Creek where people can experience life on a ranch. Wildlife viewing, trail riding and agricultural interpretation as well as a focus on natural history of the forest and natural meadows. Specialty ranches may include a working amidst cattle, buffalo and exotic ungulates where an interpretation can be linked to ranching practices or to a full service spa.

Tumbler Ridge - The accessible yet natural high elevation rolling ridges and jagged peaks with trail systems that join the various bowls and ridges and access the tremendous vistas of the surrounding peaks and ridges. Clear alpine lakes are dotted throughout the landscape. The terrain lends itself to summer and winter opportunities. Depending on the focus, the opportunities for winter can be either skiing or snowmobiling. Suitable areas for a destination lodge include the many sub-alpine and alpine meadows and unique features like Kinuseo Falls. The increasing numbers of snowmobilers and the shortage of accommodations may provide opportunities for backcountry lodges.

Hudson's Hope /Chetwynd - The high wildlife values of the rolling Butler / Aylard Ridges, northwest of Hudson's Hope, where wildlife viewing, summer hiking and winter ski touring are associated activities. The historical and recreationally significant Peace River. The nearby lakes. The accessible yet natural high elevation rolling ridges and jagged peaks of the North Rockies.

	Activities	Comments	Suitability
Chetwynd / Hudson's Hope			
Butler / Aylard	Nature observation, hiking, ski touring	Easy access. Extensive rolling open ridges.	H
Brazion/Hasler	Snowmobiling, hiking	Accessible. Extensive open ridges.	H
Howling Wolves	Snowmobiling, hiking	Accessible. Extensive open ridges. Lake.	H
Peace River	Boating	The fishing, boating and wildlife viewing of the Peace River, where the wildlife viewing, fishing and boating opportunities can be enriched by the interpretation of the rich history and natural assets of the area. Link to the river. Nature observation.	H
Moberly Lake	Activity lodge, cultural interpretation, boating, spa	The boating opportunities of Moberly Lake coupled with the availability of a 9 hole golf course and winter cross country skiing convenience in nearby Cameron Lake provides a diversity of opportunities for a Destination Lodge. Limitations are with the fishing, which is poor. Other options such as a full service spa and First Nations interpretation and exposition can add to the opportunities. Front-country.	M
Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa			
Mount Spieker	Snowmobiling, hiking	Ready access. Extensive open ridges.	H
Kinuseo Falls	Touring, hiking, ski touring	Close to high quality feature and suitable for hiking, nature interpretation.	H
Red Deer Whatley	Snowmobiling, hiking	The backcountry opportunity of the Red Deer / Whatley Ranges with their extensive alpine and sub-alpine bowls and rolling ridges. Present use is focused on snowmobiling. There is the potential for increased snowmobile use in the winter and hiking and spa related activities in the summer. Remote area with links to Alberta.	M
Dawson Creek			
Dude Ranches.	Horse riding	Private lands and may include Crown lands for variety.	H

- ***Market and Socio-economic Assessment***

Markets - Demographic changes in key markets indicate a growing demand for this product in North America and internationally, especially among baby boomers. Research has shown that a significant component of the ecotourism market is attracted to smaller, intimate, adventure-type accommodations, including cabins and lodges.[25] In particular, experienced ecotourists cite a strong preference for this type of accommodation.

Soft Adventure Traveller versus Activity Enthusiast - The soft adventure traveller looks for a lodge that will provide the best overall "experience". This includes a combination of the accommodation, food and activities offered that are high-end and/or unique. The activity enthusiast will select a lodge based on its location and support for a particular activity. This is particularly relevant for activities such as fishing or backcountry skiing, that are highly dependent on having particular resources, features and conditions.

General Consumer versus Experienced Ecotourist[26] - Lodges are generally preferred by the experienced ecotourist, with 66 percent stating cabins as their preferred choice of accommodation, followed by lodges/inns at 60 percent and tent/camping at 58 percent. In contract, the general consumer prefers to stay in hotels/motels (56 percent), although as lodges become more upscale and comfortable, they will gain increasing popularity with the general consumer as well.

Corporate versus Personal Traveller - Corporate travellers use lodges either for meetings with their own management teams and with clients and for incentive travel which is used as a means to reward/motivate employees. This segment looks for amenities such as meeting and conference rooms, fully equipped with telephones and Internet access. Individual rooms may also be required to have data access. As well, they will look for activities that promote interaction between people, particularly if the purpose of the trip is for team-building for managers or with clients. The personal traveller is looking for a unique location and activities to do with friends and/or family. This segment values the overall ambiance of the location as well as opportunity to have both privacy as desired and opportunity to meet and share experiences with other guests in common areas.

Regional competition for the lodge/resort market is intense as there is extensive development in the Canadian Rockies (Alberta and BC), Kootenays and Coastal regions. The lure of the large, popular national parks in the Rockies is a strong draw for the lodge/resort crowd. Still, there is little competition in the immediate area.

The demand for the lodge product in the Peace region is low because the vast majority of current visitors are from the highway touring market. Destination-oriented travellers are still predominantly hunters and snowmobilers, with only the latter a possibility for viable lodge/resort development. The ecotourist seeking a unique outdoor wilderness adventure within a lodge/resort setting is not currently represented in the Peace's visitor profile, not because the potential does not exist, but because there is very little product available.

---

[25] Catalogue of Exemplary Practices in Adventure Travel and Ecotourism, Pamela Wight and Associates, March 1999.

[26] Greening of Remote Tourism Lodges, Pam Wight & Associates, 1994.

Impacts/Conflicts – Visual quality is a critical component of the destination lodge experience. Visitors invariably expect a wilderness experience and the visual impacts of timber harvesting can have a deleterious affect on business. There is an expectation of wilderness by lodge visitors, particularly among the international market. This puts lodge development in direct conflict with forest harvesting activity.

Business Development - Tenure is an essential element of lodge/resort development on Crown land. The resort/lodge product will not attract the necessary investment dollars if there are uncertainties regarding land access and resource use. This may necessitate a Crown lease rather than just a Licence of Occupation from the BC Assets and Land Corporation, or undertake a private land purchase, to ensure some degree of control over the use of the facilities by other tour operators or independent visitors. The length of time it takes to get approval for a lease or license of occupation from BCALC and the uncertainty associated with the process increases the risk of new investment. Communities can help manage that risk by undertaking pre-assessment work on preferred sites and opportunities.

ALR restrictions in the Dawson Creek unit would limit site options for some lodge types, but private or IR land is preferred in some cases (e.g. Dude ranch).

The trend toward a more full-service experience will favour more packaging as well as the lodge/resort style of holiday where the visitor does not have to make a series of purchase decisions once they have arrived. Spas and retreats that focused on the business and small convention market but with an outdoor component could be viable. First Nations interpretation is virtually untapped by lodges and resorts and could significantly enhance the current profile.

The business is capital intensive, meaning market entry will be limited. While this will constrain competition, it also means development can be a slow process. Although outdoor adventure could be considered a theme in and of itself, the increasing number of lodges provincially will dilute this as a differentiating factor. Therefore, specialization will become more important for a lodge to succeed.

A lodge's impact on community and economic development can be very favourable for several reasons. First, they are primarily land-based, generating job and income opportunities for nearby communities through site development, investment and ongoing operations. Second, they increase the capacity for increased visitation to the region by adding to the facilities inventory. Third, they target market and draw in new visitors thus diversifying the local tourism market profile. Finally, they can extend partnership opportunities to existing operators for guiding or other services, thereby enhancing the viability of small businesses in the region.

Conclusions - Lodge facilities targeted at snowmobilers has good potential in the Tumbler Ridge and Chetwynd areas. Establishing linkages with existing tourism operators who have commercial recreation tenure for complementary activities (e.g. wildlife viewing, hiking, and kayaking) will be important. By being multi-activity and multi-season, lodges should be in a better position to manage their cash flow and staff.

Some theme development around the Rockies and parks would be a market advantage for new lodges/resorts. Currently, the area does not take advantage of the Rockies theme in its marketing programs, although this may change with new park development, particularly in the neighbouring Muskwa-Kechika plan area. The Canadian Tourism Commission has pointed out that there are only three themes in the entire country that have a strong international appeal, those being the Arctic, the Pacific Coast and the Rockies.

RESOURCE CRITERIA				
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**	**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**	**Dawson Creek**
Uniqueness of Key Features	Setting	High	Medium	Low
	Geography	Medium	Medium	Low
	Wildlife	Medium	High	Low
Supportive Resources	Feature Groupings	High	High	Low
	Alpine/subalpine	High	Medium	Low
	Water features	High	Medium	Medium
	Snow conditions	High	High	Low
	Fish	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Heritage	Low	Medium	High
Environmental Considerations		Low	Medium	Medium
Supportive infrastructure		High	High	High
Associated products		Snowmobiling, ski touring, hiking, boating, air tour, fishing, wildlife observation, horseback riding.		
Significance of associated products		High	High	High
Access to staging areas		High	High	High
Access from staging area to resources		Medium	High	High
Prime season		Winter	Winter	Summer
Discussion		▶ The opportunities are focused on the mountains in the mid and backcountry. Snowmobiling, ski touring and hiking are important associated activities.	▶ The opportunities are focused on the mountains where hiking, ski touring and wildlife observation (near Hudson's Hope), and snowmobiling (near Chetwynd) are important associated activities. A destination lodge associated with the Peace River has potential, as does a lodge associated with the infrastructure available at Moberly lake.	▶ Dude ranches with a wide array of associated activities the focus.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA				
UNITS:		Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa	Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope	Dawson Creek
Markets	Demand	Low-Medium	Low-Medium	Low-Medium
	Competition	Medium-High	Medium-High	Medium-High
	Overall potential	Medium	Medium	Medium
Impact/ Conflict	Use	High	High	High
	Community/Social	Low-Medium	Low-Medium	Low-Medium
Business Develop-ment Needs	Crown tenure	High	High	High
	Infrastructure	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Capital	High	High	High
Level of community support		Medium	Medium	Medium
Employment opportunities		High	High	High
Opportunities		▶ Backcountry or river lodge ▶ Alpine lodge ▶ Winter lodge (snowmobilers)	▶ Winter lodge (targeting Powder King and snowmobilers) ▶ Wildlife Observation, Ski touring and hiking lodge ▶ Golf, First Nations interpretation, lake and full amenity spa lodge opportunities.	▶ Lodges focused on First Nations interpretation and Dude Ranches. ▶ Packaging lodge-based outdoor recreation activities to business / conference markets.
Development Considerations	Regional	▶ Visual quality of the scenic landscape is an important attribute issue among ecotourists and probably more important for backcountry lodge/resort visitors than other groups. There is an expectation of wilderness by lodge visitors, particularly among the international market. ▶ The length of time it takes to get approval for a lease or license of occupation from BCALC and the uncertainty associated with the process increases the risk of new investment. Communities can help manage that risk by undertaking pre-assessment work on preferred sites and opportunities. ▶ The trend toward a more full-service experience will favour more packaging as well as the lodge/resort style of holiday where the visitor does not have to make a series of purchase decisions once they have arrived. Spas and retreats that focused on the business and small convention market but with an outdoor component could be viable. First Nations interpretation is virtually untapped by lodges and resorts and could significantly enhance the current profile.		
	Local	▶ The lack of infrastructure, services, and labour supply is an inhibitor to development.	▶ The lack of infrastructure, services, and labour supply is an inhibitor to development.	▶ The lack of Crown land and ALR restrictions would limit site options for some lodge types, but private or IR land is preferred in some cases (e.g. Dude ranch).

- ***High Opportunity Areas***

Polygon Number	Description of Polygon
1	Butler / Aylard Ridges
2	Brazion / Hasler Area
3	Howling Wolves Peak
4	Peace River
5	Mt Spieker Area
6	Kinuseo Falls
7	Dawson Creek Prairie

5.6.9 Huts

Wilderness huts are generally built to support outdoor activities in a given area as opposed to being a tourist destination unto themselves. Originally, huts were used to provide safe refuge for climbers in high alpine areas, who needed a base to climb from or in the case of inclement weather, emergency shelter. More recently, huts are being designed and built to provide greater access to the backcountry, particularly to the soft adventure market. The key advantage of huts is eliminating the need to carry equipment such as tents and cooking supplies. Within the spectrum of accommodation in the outdoors, huts fall within the "rustic" category.[27] Huts can be a single destination hut or a hut-to-hut system. The activities supported by the hut product can include hiking, climbing/mountaineering, mountain biking, backcountry skiing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowboarding, canoeing and boating,

- ***Regional Overview***

Strengths	Remoteness. Scenery. Some significant recreation features. Optimum topography in the west.
Weaknesses	Repeatability of product potential throughout the Rockies. Minimal support infrastructures (trails). Compliance and enforcement.
Concerns	Vandalism. Increased recreation use affecting "remote" experience. Forest harvesting. Access to tenure. Garbage and refuse may create bear problems.

- ***Resource Assessment***

The hut product can be either an individual destination hut or a system of huts. They can accommodate large groups or small. Generally they are single room structures that may be high end or rustic. There are a number of single or system hut product types.

Lake Huts - Suitable lakes are those with outstanding scenery and the presence of beaches and lakes that are large enough to contain a string of huts. These lakes should not have a perimeter road and the huts should preferably be accessible by boat, trails or by air. Most lakes can only accommodate a single hut accessible by air.

Trail Huts – Trail huts are best located where there is the presence of an established trail a suitable distance from population. Hut systems should be associated with loop trails whereas a destination hut can be at the end of a trail in an area with significant features or high recreation potential. The hut systems can be clustered around outstanding features such as lakes or can be a string that provides shelter along a developed trail. Trail hut systems can be used in summer and winter for a variety of activities including hiking, ski touring and snowmobiling.

River Huts - The approach is generally in a down river direction. Huts should not be accessible by road (or trail, unless it is part of a trail hut system), preferably perched on high ground, and readily viewed to prevent canoeists or kayakers into being forced to return upriver. This product is preferable in areas identified for non-motorized use.

Opportunities for all huts can be affected by the cost of maintaining trails, repeatability elsewhere, high potential for vandalism and difficulty in maintaining the site.

---

[27] "Greening of Remote Tourism Lodges", Pam Wight & Associates, 1993.

Current Availability - At present there are no commercial hut opportunities in the region. There are a number of huts that have been built for public use by the Ministry of Forests or user groups. There may be huts that were originally built by trappers or those that have been built by recreationists in favourite areas.

The two known huts in the region are on Carbon Lake (managed by the First Nations) and on Wapiti Lake (developed by the Forest Service but now managed by BC Parks). Other existing cabins in the region include the public Lost Haven Cabin at the end of 10 km of tracked trails and the O'Reilly hut within Bear Mountain.

Regional Opportunities - *Trail hut* opportunities are focused on the mountain ranges with an abundance of features.

In the *Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope Unit* the opportunity can be found in:

- Butler / Aylard ridges, where destination huts could provide accommodation and interpretive opportunities of the natural and wildlife features. Management of the hut can be from nearby Hudson's Hope. **High** suitability.
- Murray Mountain Trail off Highway 97 close to Pine Pass provides access to ridge walks. A hut would be suitable for winter and summer activities. **Medium** suitability.
- The LeMoray Ridge has features suitable for trail based hut development. Rolling alpine, small lakes and dramatic scenery all lend to a **High** suitability for the hut product.

In *Tumbler Ridge–Kakwa Unit* the optimal locations are:

- Alpine/subalpine hut system in the Albright Ridge Area, and the old railroad tunnel. **High** suitability.
- There may be an opportunity to link Wapiti and Monkman Parks. This long range opportunity will have to be linked to suitable features. **High** suitability.

Wapiti Hut **Photo: BC Forest Service**

River Hut opportunities are best suited for the Murray River. The section of the Murray between Tumbler Ridge and Fort Sasquatch is unroaded and has potential for a non-motorized wilderness hut system adventure. Huts can be strategically placed where there are pools, beaches or spits. **High** suitability. Another suitable river is the Peace River. Small huts can be located on the islands along the river where there are beaches or spits close at hand. **High** suitability.

Lake Hut opportunities are limited due to the fact that many lakes in the region are roaded, very small, or lacking in features. Lake hut opportunities may be linked to fly-in fishing but better opportunities can be found in other regions. Williston Lake may be suitable but the changes in water levels may limit docking opportunities. **Medium** suitability.

Hut Management - Huts can be located one or more kilometres apart depending on feature suitability and management capability. Consideration for potential vandalism is important. Bookings for huts can be made prior to the season. Hut locations can be posted on the Internet or described in the brochures and elaborated on during the booking. A party can book a hut for a number of days or book different huts for different days. Hikers or canoers can plan a trip with stopovers at different huts. The greater the number of huts, the more choices.

Hut Structure - Huts range from the rustic to the high end and are one room structures. The high-end huts (based on single cabins) are not to be confused with lodges, which are multiple unit. A high-end lodge is more conspicuous and will compromise a remote experience. Rustic huts are easily constructed, maintained and are less intrusive. Examples can be found with the US Forest Service huts in Alaska, and locally with the BC Parks' hut at Wapiti Lake. Huts can be designed to accommodate a large number of people however the larger the structure the more intrusive it is to the landscape and the setting. They can be placed in locations that maximize viewing and access opportunities. Rustic huts generally contain bunks, a wood stove, tables, benches and an outhouse. Water may be associated with the site or may be provided by a storage system. It is advisable that structures not use plywood as the glue is a favourite with porcupines.

On Crown land, funding for development may be through private investment or government assisted with maintenance managed by a non-profit or community organization. In general, however, the major land manager in the province, the Ministry of Forests, does not develop huts for tourism purposes.

- ***Market and Socio-economic Assessment***

Markets - Hut-to-hut is not a product per se but an amenity or infrastructure that can enhance any number of activity-based products, especially those that rely upon a trail system. Thus, opportunities for snowmobiling, Nordic skiing, hiking, trail riding, nature observation and wildlife viewing could all be enhanced with the development of a Hut System.

Although there are no consolidated statistics on a "hut market", some characteristics of hut users are well understood, and can be used to establish a location and design. **Soft adventurers** will tend to value a hut for its comfort, the access that it provides to more remote outdoor area and other amenities such as cooking facilities. The **hard adventure** traveller is likely an active enthusiast in the particular activity, and will appreciate the proximity and shelter from the elements in the high alpine or wilderness areas, making more challenging routes possible.

Single hut users will select the hut based on its location vis-à-vis a particular destination (e.g. a climbing peak) or an area (e.g. backcountry bowl for skiing) that suits the level of challenge they are seeking. They will also look for a hut that can provide a variety of excursions. Hut-to-hut users, on the other hand, will value a system that can connect a variety of features, activity areas and other experiences within in a circuit or tour. These will rarely spend more than one or two nights at a single hut.

A hut-to-hut system can lower the risk associated with some outdoor activities, thereby broadening the market appeal to the soft adventure market and increasing the viability of guiding operations. Such a system would extend access into more remote areas, opening up the possibility for more multi-day trips and giving operators more options for creating and packaging unique tours, all without adding significantly to capital and operating costs.

Impacts/Conflicts - The greatest challenge for a hut-to-hut system is how to manage for shared use and maintenance. Many hut facilities in the province were created by local recreation clubs, usually on Crown land. While access to these huts cannot be denied the public, there remain a host of issues concerning who has priority use, the implications of commercial use, ways and means of raising funds to maintain the facilities, and so forth. Invariably, the best solutions to multiple-use issues are proposed and implemented from within the region with the cooperation and participation of the affected parties. A related issue is local use of hut facilities constructed by a commercial operator. Where there is no road access, this may not pose a problem, but where unguided users have the opportunity to gain access there may be concerns about unauthorized use and possibly vandalism.

The development of alpine huts has implications for wildlife usage of an area. As the number of users increases, the impacts of factors such as garbage may be noticed, for example, through more bear problems.

Business Development - There are few instances of hut development on Crown land by commercial operators because of problems associated with vandalism and unauthorized use by the public. As huts would be constructed on an existing trail, access would be available to all trail users. Even if a private operator constructed new trails for a hut or hut system, BCAL is likely to authorize such development through a Licence of Occupation, which would still allow public use of the trails and access to the hut (although the hut itself could be locked). This lack of exclusivity is likely to deter future commercial hut development.

Activities requiring extra equipment such as kayaking or backcountry skiing will require additional storage space in the hut. For hut-to-hut systems, the activity will influence the distance between the huts. For example, an activity such as skiing or biking can cover more distance in a day than hiking.

Depending on the type and number of huts planned, capital costs can range from the modest (e.g. $20,000 for a rustic hut) to the expensive. This in turn will be affected by the market being targeted.

Conclusions – There is some potential for hut development in the study area, but the lack of development in other outdoor products and uncertainties about ownership and management will have a tempering effect. Hut development is almost always based on providing access to some outstanding outdoor recreation feature or activity for which a minimum amount of market appeal already exists. The 10th Mountain hut system in Colorado, the marine hut system in Alaska and the alpine hut system in the southern Canadian Rockies have all been successful because they have enhanced an existing product (e.g. ski touring, ocean kayaking, mountaineering, respectively). For the Dawson Creek Forest District, hut development should be considered in terms of its ability to improve a high-potential product. There is potential for lake, river and trail huts in Tumbler Ridge, Chetwynd and Hudson's Hope. Huts can also be used to draw snowmobilers into some of the more remote areas of the district.

All three of the above-mentioned hut systems were developed with public capital, in part because they occurred on Crown/public land. The involvement of multiple stakeholders and associated communities will be critical to hut development because of its multi-use character and potential to benefit a spectrum of products.

RESOURCE CRITERIA										
UNITS:		**Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa**			**Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope**			**Dawson Creek**		
		Trail	River	Lake	Trail	River	Lake	Trail	River	Lake
Uniqueness of Key Features	Setting	High	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	Low		
	Geography	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Low		
	Wildlife	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium		
Supportive Resources	Suitable terrain	High	High	High	High	Medium	High	Low		
	Scenery	High	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	Low		
	Features	Medium-High	High	High	Medium-High	High	Medium	Low		
	Snow(land) or fish	High	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	High		
Environmental Considerations		High	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	High		
Supportive infrastructure		High	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	Low		
Associated products		Land based: hiking, animal assisted, horse riding, mountain biking, skiing, snowmobiling Water based: non-motorized, motorized, hiking.								
Significance of associated products		High	High	High	High	High	High	High		
Access to staging areas		High	High	High	High	High	High	High		
Access from staging area to resources		High	High	Low-High	High	High	High	High		
Prime season		All	Summer	Summer	All	Summer	All	Winter		
Discussion		▸ TRAIL HUTS: are associated with Albright Ridge and the old railway tunnel. ▸ RIVER HUTS: are associated with the Murray River north of Tumbler Ridge. ▸ LAKE HUTS: are associated with Wapiti Lake, Onion Lake and other mountain lakes.			▸ TRAIL HUTS: are associated with the ridges adjoining highway 97 toward the Pine Pass (LeMoray) and Butler / Aylard. ▸ RIVER HUTS: are associated with the many islands along the Peace River. ▸ LAKE HUTS: associated with Williston Lake, Moberly Lake and small lakes in the unit.			▸ TRAIL HUTS: are associated with trail systems in forest lands to the south. May be best suited for winter snowmobile activity.		

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA

UNITS:		Tumbler Ridge-Kakwa	Chetwynd-Hudson's Hope	Dawson Creek
Markets	Demand	Low	Low	Low
	Competition	Low	Low	Low
	Overall potential	Medium	Medium	Medium
Impact/ Conflict	Use	High	High	High
	Community/Social	Low	Low	Low
Business Development Needs	Crown tenure	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Infrastructure	Low	Low	Low
	Capital	Medium	Medium	Medium
Level of community support		High	High	Medium
Employment opportunities		Low	Low	Low
	Opportunities	▸ Trail huts focused on summer and winter trail based activities (Albright, railway tunnel) ▸ River huts (Murray) ▸ Lake Huts (Wapiti, Onion, smaller lakes) ▸ Forest company collaboration on facility planning	▸ Trail huts (Dunlevy, Pine Pass) ▸ Lake huts focused on summer and winter trail based activities (Williston, Moberly) ▸ Forest company collaboration on facility planning and development	▸ Potential for linking hut development to non-conventional products such as dog-sledding.
Development Considerations	Regional	▸ Huts and hut systems can involve a diverse range of development concepts, from high-cost, high-comfort facilities that are almost mini-lodges to very rustic alpine huts, and outdoor activities, including ski touring, snowshoeing, backpacking and kayaking. For the study area, many development scenarios are possible. ▸ There are some huts in the study area, mainly rustic, that serve a variety of activities, primarily hiking and ski touring. ▸ Commercial tenure can be avoided for Nordic huts if the system is owned or managed by non-profit organizations. A public system of huts that could accommodate a broad range of user groups would require some form of public investment and community involvement. ▸ Hut management can be complex depending on factors such as location, access and the number of intended users and use groups. Hut management requires bookings, maintenance, rehabilitation and enforcement of trespass. Bookings, especially, can be complicated, especially if they are accepted prior to the season. High levels of use will requiring frequent maintenance may necessitate proximity to a population centre or a base of operation. ▸ Compliance and enforcement parameters (with regards to trespass and non-payment) need to be established.		
	Local	▸ The prime suitability areas are in the alpine and servicing these facilities from Tumbler Ridge would be a challenge.	▸ A good relationship with forestry administration and planning is necessary. ▸ Concerns over Dunlevy DMZ may dominate discussions. ▸ Canfor is undertaking more recreation management and manages two forest rec sites in TFL 48 (Carbon Lake and Gething Creek).	▸ The lack of alpine access will constrain development, as will the large tracts of private land, which make it difficult to establish area-based activities from huts.

- ***High Opportunity Areas***

Polygon Number	Description of Polygon
1	Butler / Aylard Ridges
2	Peace River
3	LeMoray Area
4	Albright Ridge Area
5	Wapiti / Onion Area
6	Murray River

6 Community Action Plan

The previous chapter focused on opportunities related to product development. This chapter deals with broader tourism and community development issues that have implications for product development. The focus is on correcting weaknesses and gaps that may impede development. Without the basic building blocks of economic development, communities will find it difficult to attract and grow the investment, entrepreneurship, labour and infrastructure needed to create high value tourism.

6.1 Issues Overview

There is a steadily growing global market for adventure and wilderness-related tourism products, and the Dawson Creek Forest District has specific features to attract a share of this market. The key development challenges are to:

- develop the local commitment to capitalize on the most promising opportunities;
- prepare the most promising products for the market;
- develop quality products that will be competitive regionally and nationally; and,
- attract the financing and investment capital required for the development of suitable tourism opportunities.

The consultants have heard from numerous community stakeholders on their goals and objectives for the tourism sector in the Dawson Creek Forest District. The key community challenges are to:

- develop adventure products in a manner that protects community values (e.g. environmental, recreational) and maximizes community participation in terms of ownership and employment; and,
- expand the economic benefits derived from tourism development within the local communities.

6.2 Issues Scan

Several key issues were identified during the course of this project by the consulting team either through research, analysis or direct input from community stakeholders and tourism operators. The project team believes these issues should be addressed in further product development planning if the Dawson Creek Forest District is to develop its tourism industry in a manner consistent with community and tourism industry needs. The following points have been raised across the region.

A. Communities in the Dawson Creek Forest District have identified tourism as a key future economic activity and each community has been working on specific tourism initiatives over the past several years. The communities are becoming more involved in the processes and activities associated with tourism development. The communities recognize the utility of economic diversification into tourism, and have expressed a desire to have tourism contribute to their local economies.

B. In some communities, local residents, particularly those not directly employed by the tourism industry, must show support towards tourism development. Some residents remain skeptical about the value of tourism and transmit a negative attitude towards tourists. They may also be concerned about the impacts tourism will have on the area. Additional educational efforts may be required to show the positive economic impact of tourism for the region and community discussions must occur to explore solutions to local concerns.

C. Tourism stakeholders have identified the tenure process for operating on Crown land and the number of different agencies that operators must deal with in conducting their tourism venture as a barrier to effectively moving tourism opportunities forward in a timely and efficient fashion. This has made it difficult for many tourism opportunities to attract the investment needed for implementation.

D. Community representatives have identified several transportation issues as primary impediments to tourism development locally. One of the key concerns is the need for road upgrading in the region, particularly Highway 29. The lack of trails and signage to several key tourism features has been identified as limiting access for tourists coming to the area. As well, the lack of direct commercial air service to the region, and the high costs of air travel, are competitive disadvantages for the region's tourism operators.

E. There needs to be better cooperation between local organizations and tourism interests. Ways need to be explored to collaborate over the use and development of specific areas in the region. Currently various groups are in competition when there may be opportunities to accommodate multiple tourism and recreation objectives to the benefit of all.

F. Throughout the Dawson Creek Forest District there are several tourism products currently being developed or considered by communities. Effort should be given to ensuring that the communities in the region work collaboratively to develop connected and complementary products for the touring public.

G. Some of the products identified in this report will require a significant capital investment. Clearly, attracting this kind of capital will be a challenge. An investor will be seeking the best return on investment and minimal risk exposure. The investment decision will be influenced by factors such as the market for the product, the competition, the security of the land base, the location of the venture, and the entrepreneur's experience in the sector. Community and government support will be necessary to create a favourable investment climate.

H. One issue mentioned during research for this project was that of non-resident owners and managers of local accommodation facilities s who do not buy-in to community tourism development goals. The fact that many facilities cater predominantly to the oil & gas and forestry workers also makes it difficult to create and promote a tourism vision within the hospitality sector.

I. It appears that in some instances different organizations involved in tourism have not been able to work in a collaborative fashion to benefit the regional tourism sector. While tourism apparently remains a high priority for the communities in the region, many key personnel do not have enough resources to properly pursue goals and objectives that they would like to undertake in the tourism sector.

6.3 Community Strategy Recommendations

The Tourism Opportunity Study for the Dawson Creek Forest District identified several specific tourism products with high tourism development potential. This section outlines the tourism products with the best development potential and explores next steps for each of the four community areas in the Forest District: Hudson's Hope, Chetwynd, Tumbler Ridge and Dawson Creek.

6.3.1 Hudson's Hope Action Plan

- ***Local Tourism Overview***

Table 6-1 outlines the most recent census information on the labour force for Hudson's Hope. The labour force data does not specifically identify the tourism workforce as it is spread across several service producing categories. Overall, between 1996 and 1986 the labour force in Hudson's Hope increased by approximately 9 percent with the goods producing sector decreasing and the service producing sector increasing in size.

Table 6-1: Labour Force Trend for the District of Hudson's Hope (1986, 1991 and 1996)

Goods Producing	**1986**	**1991**	**1996**	**% Change (1986-96)**
Agriculture, Fishing and Trapping	30	20	30	0%
Logging and Forestry Industries	30	25	45	50%
Mining	50	10	10	-80%
Manufacturing Industries	0	10	0	0%
Construction	50	50	35	-30%
Total goods producing	**160**	**115**	**120**	**-25%**
Service Producing				
Transportation	10	35	10	0%
Communications and Utilities	130	115	175	35%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	15	10	25	65%
Business, Personal, and Other Services	0	10	0	0%
Government Services	100	70	110	10%
Wholesale and Retail	10	60	65	650%
Accom., Food & Beverage Services	60	30	20	-65%
• Accommodation services	---	10	10	
• Food and Beverage services	---	20	10	
Total Services Producing	**325**	**330**	**405**	**+25%**
Industry Not Classified	15	40	20	
Total Labour Force	**500**	**475**	**545**	**9%**

Source: Statistics Canada - 1996, 1991, and 1986 Census

The primary sectors of the labour force supported by tourism include accommodation, food and beverage services, which have actually declined between 1986 and 1996 in Hudson's Hope. However, growth in the retail sector, which depends to some degree on tourism, has moved in the opposite direction showing strong and consistent growth.

The recent tourism inventory of the Dawson Creek Forest District identified 15 tourism related businesses and operations in Hudson's Hope. Of these, 5 are accommodation providers, 6 are guiding and touring companies, and the remainder provide various attractions and tourism support services.

- ***Community Tourism Development Efforts***

The community of Hudson's Hope has been proactive in becoming more involved in developing tourism opportunities locally and is undertaking several specific tasks including:

Portage Mountain Ski Hill Development - The Hudson's Hope Ski Association has been working towards developing Portage Mountain as a ski hill. Portage Mountain is within the municipal boundaries of Hudson's Hope and is 1,425 metres high with the north-slope facing Peace Reach on Williston Lake. Currently, the Association is working on the planning and logistics of this development.

Boat Launch on the Peace River - The District of Hudson's Hope has been working with BC Hydro to develop a new boat launch on the Peace River. Several issues remain to be resolved; however, eventually the District is anticipating the development of a new facility that will assist with tourism and recreation access to the Peace River.

Area Hiking Trails - The District of Hudson's Hope has been active in developing walking and hiking trails within the District boundaries. The focus has been on upgrading and cutting new trails that provide walking and hiking opportunities of approximately one hour in duration.

Lodge Developments - Two local entrepreneurs are in the process of developing destination lodges in the Dunlevy Area. One development is located just outside the District's boundaries and once completed will be one of the largest log structures in BC. The second lodge will be in a remote area and accessible by water only. When completed these lodges could provide important accommodation support to future adventure tourism activities in the area.

As well, Hudson's Hope has been involved in the recently completed Hudson's Hope Tourism Development Review.[28] This study made five recommendations on approaches to further developing tourism activities in the Dunlevy Creek Recreational Management Zone. Currently, the District of Hudson's Hope is in the process of updating the District of Hudson's Hope's Official Community Plan (OCP). The Hudson's Hope OCP will review land use throughout the District and explore some economic development activities for the community, including tourism development.

Overall, tourism has received a high level of attention within the community of Hudson's Hope.

- ***Recommendations***

This Tourism Opportunity Study has identified several tourism products that are in close proximity to Hudson's Hope and that the community may want to consider for tourism development. This section outlines specific tourism opportunities and explores the next steps that would be associated with considering these adventure tourism products for development.

---

[28] Dan Gauvin, Hudson's Hope Tourism Development Review. Prepared for the Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association.

Canoeing and kayaking on the Peace River - between Hudson's Hope and Halfway River. This would be a family oriented experience on the portion of the river tamed by the dam and is rated as suitable for beginners. There would be good opportunities to observe wildlife and engage in fishing activities to compliment the journey. The River is deep and up to a kilometre wide in many spots and has over 100 islands ranging from half to 120 hectares in size. The Hudson's Hope portion of the River is silt free and clear. The trip from Hudson's Hope to Halfway River would represent a one to two day experience.

Objective: Development of a one or two day, family-oriented canoeing and kayaking opportunity on the Peace River. This could be developed as a guided touring opportunity or unguided opportunity.

Status of Infrastructure: Undeveloped camping is available on the many beaches, sand and gravel bars, sheltered backwaters and channels. Access points include Hudson's Hope "old ferry landing", Halfway River "old fort", Peace Island Park at Taylor, and Clayhurst ferry landing.

Ancillary Services: There is currently three Bed and Breakfast operations, and one campground that could benefit from increased family visits to the Hudson's Hope area. The community also has four guiding companies and a charter boat company that may consider developing this activity to expand their tourism activities. Two lodges are being developed in the Hudson's Hope area that may also find this product of interest to their guests.

Development Tasks: There is currently no businesses providing a guided river experience on this portion of the river targeted at the family-oriented market. To develop this opportunity the community may want to consider the following tasks:

- Explore the community interest and identify local issues that would be associated with this opportunity.
- Undertake planning that will identify the appropriate government agencies and identify the permitting and land use issues that will need to be addressed in order to develop the commercial venture.
- Work with the local existing tourism operators to identify if there is an interest to consider this opportunity.
- If there are no local tourism operators interested in this opportunity, develop a community prospectus outlining the opportunity and begin searching for an appropriate adventure tourism operator to consider the opportunity.

Summer Trail Hiking in the Hudson's Hope area - There are several trails in the Hudson's Hope area including trails at Rocky Mountain, Bullhead Mountain, 20 Mile Ridge, Carbon Falls, Firewall Trail and Maurice Creek. Of these, Firewall Trail and Maurice Creek are of particular tourism importance. Firewall Trail is in Butler Ridge Park and is a 24 kilometre trail cutting through forest to spectacular alpine scenery and ending at Chinaman Lake. This trail provides the opportunity to see a variety of wildlife, lakes, and is noted for its unique rock formations. At Maurice Creek there is a 6.5 kilometre trail that leads to the upper and lower Maurice Creek waterfalls. Collectively the trail system in the Hudson's Hope area could contribute to the extension of stays and attraction of adventure tourists to the area.

Objective: Increase sales made by local businesses (e.g., accommodation and retail stores) by lengthening visitor's stay in Hudson's Hope and attracting new visitors through an expanded range of summer trail hiking experiences.

Status of Infrastructure: The main infrastructure element is the development and maintenance of trails themselves. The District of Hudson's Hope has actively participated in trail development and maintenance in the Hudson's Hope area.

Ancillary Services: This product could assist in supporting the existing accommodation operations and local retailers.

Development Tasks: The various trails already exist; however, on-going maintenance and signage upgrading are required to ensure visitors feel comfortable using the trail system and easily find and access them. The community may want to consider several tasks to raise the profile of the trail system including:

- Determine if any of the identified trails fit within Hudson's Hope's trail development goals and objectives. Explore the priorities of future upgrading and trail development in the Hudson's Hope area.
- Explore the development of maps that can be displayed at the trail heads and at the Information Centre.
- Consider the development of the trail information in a community brochure and explore funding for the development of further trail signage.
- Consider the construction of wildlife viewing or interpretation platforms in areas of high wildlife viewing incidence.
- Work with the local businesses to determine if a local drop-off and pick-up service for various trails can be established.
- Explore the interest in the community of a local entrepreneur or association providing interpretation on the trail system.

Destination Lodge or Hut(s) in the Butler / Aylard Ridge Area. - Hut(s) or a destination lodge would provide accommodation and interpretive opportunities of the significant natural and wildlife features in the Butler / Aylard Ridge Area. The hut(s) or lodge could capitalize on existing trail networks and would be in close proximity to Hudson's Hope. The key to a venture such as this is the supporting products that would be developed along with the hut(s) or lodge to attract guests. In the case of Butler / Aylard Ridge this could include nature observation, wildlife viewing, hiking and cross-country skiing. Linkages to water-based recreation on Williston Lake, Dinosaur Lake and the Peace River and hydro-electric and palaeontological interpretation at the dam visitor centres would also be possible. While hut(s) and lodges can provide an incremental increase in adventure tourism locally, without the development of the associated guiding and ecotourism products the local economic potential will not be evident. For example, in Alaska, the US Forest Service maintains an extensive network of huts rented for between $25 US and $45 US a day. However, tours offering guided ocean kayaking and accommodation in the same area charge upwards of $2,000 US for a seven day guided experience.

Objective: Development of hut(s) or destination lodge in order to provide supporting infrastructure for ecotourism tourism products in the Butler / Aylard Ridge Area.

Status of Infrastructure: Currently there are no lodges or hut(s) in the area, although two nearby lodges are being proposed.

Ancillary Services: This product could assist in supporting the existing use of area trail systems and provide a new tourism opportunity for area guiding businesses.

Development Tasks: The development of a hut(s) or a lodge would require a considerable financial commitment for the organization or entrepreneur undertaking the venture. With this in mind some preliminary community steps might include:

- Discussion with BC Parks about allowing a hut or lodge in the Butler Ridge Park. As yet, there is no Management Plan for the park. Any management direction that stipulates a wilderness-type vision may not allow any structural development within park boundaries. The community should work with BC Parks to ensure management planning meets community as well as provincial needs.
- Identifying the level of community support of this type of development in the Butler Ridge Area.
- Identifying and exploring the government processes required to obtain appropriate use permits and land use issues that would be associated with the development.
- Undertaking an assessment to determine if the opportunity has the potential to be viable.
- If the opportunity is viable, preparation of a prospectus on the opportunity and begin a search for an entrepreneur to develop the site.
- Once the entrepreneur is identified and begins the business planning phase, continue to assist with the government regulatory process for the project.

6.3.2 Chetwynd Action Plan

- ***Local Tourism Overview***

Table 6-2 outlines the most recent census information on the labour force for Chetwynd. The labour force data does not specifically identify the tourism workforce as it is spread across several service producing categories. Overall, between 1996 and 1986 the labour force in Chetwynd has increased by approximately 10 percent with the goods producing sector increasing by 3 percent while the service producing sector increased by 14 percent.

Table 6-2: Labour Force Trend for the Chetwynd (1986, 1991 and 1996)

Goods Producing	**1986**	**1991**	**1996**	**% Change (1986-96)**
Agriculture, Fishing and Trapping	20	20	25	+25%
Logging and Forestry Industries	115	80	115	0%
Mining	180	115	115	-36%
Manufacturing (mostly forest products)	280	300	310	+11%
Construction	50	190	100	+100%
Total Goods Producing	**645**	**715**	**665**	**+3%**
Service Producing				
Transportation & Pipelines	95	75	100	+5%
Communications and Utilities	40	30	65	+62%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	55	75	75	+36%
Government Services	175	270	210	+20%
Wholesale and Retail	155	155	230	+48%
Business, Personal, and Other Services	155	60	105	-32%
• Amusement & Recreation Services	---	25	25	
• Other Business & Services	---	35	80	
Accom., Food & Beverage Services	130	140	135	+4%
• Accommodation services	---	55	80	
• Food and Beverage services	---	85	55	
Total Services Producing	**805**	**805**	**920**	**+14%**
Industry Not Classified	45	5	55	
Total Labour Force	**1,495**	**1,525**	**1,640**	**+10%**

Source: Statistics Canada - 1996, 1991, and 1986 Census.

The primary sectors of the labour force supported by tourism include accommodation, food and beverage services, which have shown a slight increase between 1986 and 1996 in Chetwynd. However, growth in the retail sector, which is typically dependent to some degree on tourism, showed better growth between 1986 and 1996.

The recent tourism inventory of the Dawson Creek Forest District identified approximately 27 tourism-related businesses and operations in Chetwynd. Of these, 13 are accommodation providers, 2 were guiding and touring companies, seven involved transportation and transportation services, and the remainder provided various attractions (i.e. golf course, museum, etc.).

- ***Community Tourism Development Efforts***

The community of Chetwynd has been exploring local tourism development recently and is undertaking specific tasks to strengthen and diversify the sector including:

Snowmobile Destination Marketing - The District of Chetwynd has recently become more proactive in developing snowmobile adventure tourism locally. In the past six months the community has undertaken several specific activities to support snowmobiling locally including:

- Participating in the Annual Alberta Snowmobile Show in Edmonton, Alberta in the fall of 2000.
- Purchasing advertising in the SnoRiders West Magazine that is recognized by the BC Snowmobile Federation.
- Working with the Chetwynd Snowmobile Club to develop a brochure for snowmobile tourism.
- Currently the District is working with the snowmobile club to develop trail maps.

Snowmobile Trail Development - In partnership, the Chetwynd Snowmobile Club and the District of Chetwynd are undertaking work to identify and map key snowmobile areas including:

- Outlining and mapping of five significant trails located near Hasler Flats.
- Installation of directional signage on snowmobile trails through funding from the District of Chetwynd. The club is compiling GPS coordinates for the trails before the signage is installed.
- Development of trail maps for promotion of snowmobile trails in the area.

Tourism Information Centre - Currently, the District of Chetwynd is advertising a request for proposals for an organization to operate the Tourism Information Centre that is open in the summer.

Local Walking Trail Development - Over the past three years Chetwynd has been actively developing walking trails in close proximity to the community. These trails have been developed to highlight several wooden chainsaw sculptures. A brochure has been developed identifying the trails and highlighting the locations of these sculptures.

New Guide Outfitters Operation - A family business will begin an adventure tourism operation beginning in the spring. This business will provide guiding and expediting as well as hovercraft river tours. The family business anticipates operations will begin full time this summer.

As well, the District of Chetwynd is in the process of completing a local economic development strategic plan for the community. This strategy will look at several areas of opportunity locally and includes a section specifically focused on tourism.

Overall, Chetwynd is beginning to look closely at several tourism opportunities that may benefit its local economy.

- ***Recommendations***

This Tourism Opportunity Study has identified several tourism products in the Chetwynd area as having development potential. This section outlines specific products and explores next steps that would be associated with considering these adventure tourism products for development.

Commercial Snowmobiling focused on the Hasler Area - Chetwynd is in close proximity to several high quality snowmobiling areas including the Hasler Creek Area. The Chetwynd Snowmobile Club has recently mapped five trails in the Hasler Area and is currently working with the District of Chetwynd to develop maps and signage. Currently the area is very popular with local snowmobilers but there is no significant usage of the area by non-resident snowmobilers.

Objective: Development of the Hasler Area as a destination snowmobiling area used to draw non-resident snowmobilers to Chetwynd. This could be developed as both a guided touring opportunity and an unguided opportunity.

Status of Infrastructure: Five trails have been identified and currently in use locally. As well, several mountain areas are accessible which provide hill climbing and alpine snowmobiling opportunities.

Ancillary Services: Non-resident snowmobilers will utilize additional services within the existing accommodation and service sector in Chetwynd. Typically this component of the local economy is slow during the winter months when snowmobiling is undertaken. As well, the opportunity exists to develop a new tourism business in the form of a local snowmobiling guiding business.

Development Tasks: The community has already begun exploring this opportunity with the snowmobile club. However, to ensure that business opportunities are maximized, the community may want to consider the following tasks:

- Explore the community interest and support among the snowmobile club and other key stakeholders to have this area used as a tourism area.
- If snowmobile tourism is acceptable, establish a working committee to explore how the area will be managed including:
  - Exploring if there should be a management plan developed for this snowmobiling area (explore models developed in Valemount and Revelstoke and underway in Logan Lake).
  - Identify the type of partnerships that will need to be developed between the snowmobile club, local business, and the District to ensure trail grooming and other maintenance activities are in place and carried out.
- Continue to implement the trail mapping and signage for snowmobiling.
- Conduct a safety risk assessment that balances the need for trail diversity with high avalanche ratings.
- Construction of huts or lodges that cater to snowmobiling in the summer and hiking opportunities in the summer.
- Undertake a viability assessment regarding the establishment of a local snowmobiling venture.

- Develop and implement a marketing plan focused on attracting non-resident snowmobilers to the area.
- Explore partnerships with surrounding communities in the marketing and promotion of the area as a snowmobile destination.

River Boating on the Pine River - The Pine River flows from the Northern Rockies and passes through Chetwynd before meeting the Peace River near Taylor. Day trips or over night trips could be developed on the Pine. An exciting jet boat trip on the rapids and canyon of the Pine River between the Sukunka and Murray can be linked with a circle tour by road. A multi-day boating opportunity could be developed in combination with the East Pine portion of the river.

Objective: Development of a River Boating venture utilizing the Pine River in the Chetwynd area. This opportunity would be a guided tourism experience.

Status of Infrastructure: There is currently water access in the Chetwynd area that could be utilized. As well, there is a local entrepreneur exploring the area rivers for river and jet boating experiences.

Ancillary Services: This product would assist in diversification of the local tourism product and contribute to local efforts to keep the travelling public in the Chetwynd area for longer periods. This in turn would provide additional services to the existing accommodation and service sector in Chetwynd.

Development Tasks: There has been some interest locally in developing this type of product. However, more work will be required so that this potential opportunity is developed as a viable venture and the community may want to consider the following tasks:

- Confirm community support for this type of activity on the area rivers.
- Work with government agencies to identify the potential land use issues and the permits required to undertake this type of venture. Any long-term use of Crown land for camping or day-use will require CR tenure.
- Undertake a viability assessment and if positive, complete a prospectus and/or work with local entrepreneurs to develop the opportunity.
- Assist with the development of a marketing plan for the venture and that would also connect this activity with other tourism marketing efforts in the community.

Tourism Communication and Coordination in Chetwynd to Support Tourism Marketing - Several groups and organizations have expressed an interest in tourism development and marketing. As well, the Pine River oil spill has had a major negative effect on the community's tourism image. Currently, the District of Chetwynd is working at developing their tourism advertising. However, the biggest obstacle in tourism development in Chetwynd is that the word is not getting out.

Objective: To maximize the efforts of all tourism interests and better promote the community and target the touring public.

Status: Currently the District and individual operators undertake marketing and promotion activities; however, these activities are not necessarily coordinated or targeted.

Development Tasks: There could be some utility from working together, and the community and tourism sector may want to consider several key tasks including:

- Explore the implementation of an information vehicle that would bring the guide outfitters, snowmobilers, other tourism operators, and the District of Chetwynd together to discuss resources and approaches for the area's tourism activities and promotion.
- Ensure the Information Centre is well resourced to promote all adventure tourism activities in the area.
- Explore cross-promotional efforts among the various groups.
- Undertake a marketing audit to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of existing marketing programs and identify areas of improvement.
- Explore commitment of new resources and develop new marketing materials and approaches locally.
- Explore commitment of new resources and develop new marketing materials and approaches locally.
- Consider developing a collaborative marketing plan to ensure tourism attraction efforts are focused and efficient.

6.3.3 Tumbler Ridge Action Plan

- ***Local Tourism Overview***

Table 6-3 outlines the most recent census information on the labour force for Tumbler Ridge. The labour force data does not specifically identify the tourism workforce as it is spread across several service producing categories. Overall, between 1986 and 1996 the labour force in Tumbler Ridge has decreased by approximately 9 percent with the goods producing sector decreasing 19 percent and the service producing sector increasing by 15 percent.

Table 6-3: Labour Force Trend for the District of Tumbler Ridge (1986, 1991 and 1996)

Goods Producing	**1986**	**1991**	**1996**	**% Change (1986-96)**
Agriculture, Fishing and Trapping	0	0	0	0%
Logging and Forestry Industries	0	15	0	0%
Mining	1,455	1,495	1,145	-21%
Manufacturing Industries	50	40	40	-20%
Construction	0	10	35	Increase
Total Goods Producing	**1,505**	**1,560**	**1,220**	**-19%**
Service Producing				
Transportation	40	40	85	+212%
Communications and Utilities	5	25	15	+300%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	50	35	45	-10%
Government Services	200	285	250	+25%
Wholesale and Retail	185	245	195	+5%
Business, Personal, and Other Services	125	185	160	+28%
• Amusement & Recreation Services	---	30	30	
• Other Business & Services	---	155	130	
Accom., Food & Beverage Services	115	100	80	-30%
• Accommodation services	---	25	30	
• Food and Beverage services	---	75	50	
Total Services Producing	**720**	**915**	**830**	**+15%**
Industry Not Classified	60	5	20	
Total Labour Force	**2,285**	**2,480**	**2,070**	**-9%**

Source: Statistics Canada - 1996, 1991, and 1986 Census.

The primary sectors of the labour force supported by tourism include accommodation, food and beverage services, which have actually declined between 1986 and 1996 in Tumbler Ridge. However, growth in the retail sector, which is typically dependent to some degree on tourism, has moved in the opposite direction showing growth between 1986 and 1996.

The recent tourism inventory of the Dawson Creek Forest District identified approximately 14 tourism-related businesses and operations in the Tumbler Ridge. Of these, 7 are accommodation providers, 2 were touring companies, one ecotourism cooperative, and the remainder provide various attractions and tourism support services (i.e. golf course and associations). In total, approximately 50 jobs were identified with the 14 operations, with the two touring companies and the ecotourism cooperative all being relatively new ventures in the Tumbler Ridge area.

- ***Community Tourism Development Efforts***

Tumbler Ridge has undertaken several specific initiatives and continues to work on the development and promotion of tourism in the area. Specific initiatives include:

Hiking and Cross Country Ski Trail Development - Hiking and Cross Country Ski Trails have been developed along the ridge on the south side of the community as well as to key lookouts that showcase wilderness areas. The Wolverine Nordic & Mountain Society, the local outdoor club, identified these trails. The District acquired small grants with which to hire students to clear trails and install signage. Traditionally grants have been acquired each summer in order to maintain the trails as well as perform other duties with the public works department. Trail signage and a cross country ski cabin as well as a new trail to a waterfall was developed under Forest Renewal Recreation Funding.

Snowmobile Events and Marketing - The Ridge Riders Snowmobile Club and the District of Tumbler Ridge have participated in five on-going activities to promote and develop commercial snowmobiling in the Tumbler Ridge area. These activities include:

- ***The Alaska Challenge.*** The Ridge Riders Snowmobile Club assisted in gaining recognition for snowmobiling in Tumbler Ridge through the Rendezvous 92 Alaska Challenge. This effort was coordinated jointly with the District of Tumbler Ridge and the Ridge Riders Snowmobile Club for the Alaska Highway 50th Anniversary Celebration. This was a cross-country snowmobile trip that began in Tumbler Ridge and ended in Fairbanks Alaska. The local club escorted participants from across Canada on this journey. The press coverage helped put snowmobiling in Tumbler Ridge on the map.
- ***Windy Ridge Hill Climb.*** The Windy Ridge snowmobile hill climb has been an annual event for 14 years. This event is coordinated by the local snowmobile club with some funding support from the District of Tumbler Ridge. This event traditionally draws 600 spectators and 35 participants each year.
- ***Snowmobile Shows.*** Over the past nine years the District of Tumbler Ridge has purchased space and paid travel costs for the Ridge Riders Snowmobile Club to participate in both the BC Snowmobile Show and the Alberta Snowmobile Show. Members of the Ridge Riders Snowmobile Club attend the show and man the booth.
- ***Snowmobiling Advertising.*** Advertising for commercial snowmobiling is done through several publications including: SnoRiders West, the NRAHTA vacation guide, glossy visitor guide brochures produced by the District, topographic maps with trails outlined, and a display that is used at events within the region.
- ***Weekly Snow Conditions.*** The Snow mobile Club in conjunction with the District post a weekly report on snow mobile conditions in the mountains. This report is distributed to all area sled shops, regional radio stations and the NRAHTA Snow Reports through Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourist Association (NRAHTA).

Wolverine Nordic & Mountain Society Events, Trail Development and Web site - The Wolverine Nordic & Mountain Society has undertaken several initiatives that have benefited outdoor tourism in the Tumbler Ridge area. Five specific initiatives have been particularly useful in developing the area's adventure tourism and include:

- ***The Emperor's Challenge Half Marathon.*** The Emperor's Challenge is a half marathon that has been coordinated by the Wolverine Nordic and Mountain Society for the past two years. This events draws participants from across British Columbia. It is a grueling run across 21 km of rugged mountain terrain (Roman Mt. located east of Tumbler Ridge).
- ***Annual Ski Loppet*****.** The Ski Loppet has been taking place for the past four years. This is a 22 km cross country ski race in the forest. It also has a short recreational race on the golf course. This event runs in conjunction with the winter carnival.
- ***Trails Identified and Developed.*** Over the past several years the club identified specific trails and obtained permission from the Ministry of Forests to develop trails in the wilderness. Of particular interest are the Murray Canyon Trail just 30 km northeast of Tumbler Ridge, the Stone Corral which is located on the outskirts of Monkman Provincial Park, and Quality Creek Falls located 5 km northeast of Tumbler Ridge. Some of these trails have become attractions introducing visitors to the area's wilderness.
- ***Web Site Development.*** The club has developed a web site showcasing the backcountry in the Tumbler Ridge area. This web site has an extensive up-to-date photo library, an activity calendar inviting people to take part in club day-trips, and an event calendar advertising the major events coordinated by the club.
- ***Dog Sled Racing.*** The Dog Sled Races are now in their third year and are becoming a popular event. They also run in conjunction with the annual winter carnival.

Community Resource Board Tourism Initiatives. The District of Tumbler Ridge has formed a community resource board. Under tourism the Community Resource Board has identified four tourism initiatives:

- Wilderness Lodge – Accommodations
- Cottonwood Apartment Building – Accommodations
- Mistahaywa Wayatinaw Tourism Cooperative – Identify their goals
- Stoney Lake Forestry Camp – Acquire camp and develop into an attraction.

The board has identified specific action plans for each initiative. The board membership is Mayor & Council with each Councillor assigned specific tasks. Other parties who would be of assistance to the project will be brought in later.

Mistahaywa Wayatinaw Tourism Cooperative Product Development - The Mistahaywa Wayatinaw Tourism Cooperative is a group of local residents that invites local tourism operators to work collectively through a cooperative to promote tourism activities. At present there is no actual business taking place. However two initiatives are being explored including:

- ***Korean Student Eco Tourism ESL.*** There was an opportunity to host an Eco Tourism English as a Second Language program this year but the opportunity was lost due to the lack of local accommodations. An attempt is being made to host a smaller program using camp facilities and schools. If successful a winter camp will be pursued.
- ***Application for Backcountry Tenures.*** The Cooperative is pursuing tenure for five destination areas. The group is working to develop three-day packages that would include taking groups on hiking tours in the area. They are also investigating tenure at Monkman Provincial Park to provide education tours.

Book on Area's Backcountry - Dr. Charles Helm has just completed a book that will soon be going to press. This book outlines all the wilderness locations that can be accessed, and will serve as an important reference for anyone wishing to experience the area's backcountry.

- ***Recommendations***

Promotion, Infrastructure and Business Development Associated with Snowmobiling – The District and the local snowmobile club have been actively participating in marketing and developing snowmobiling in the Tumbler Ridge area. There are several quality riding locations including: Babcock Mountain Trail, Quintette Mountain, Core Lodge, Windy Ridge, Summit Meadows, Back Meadow, Spieker Mountain, Wolverine Valley, Albright Ridge, Moose Lake, Bearhole Lake, Mount Reesor, and Thunder Mountain Trail. Collectively, this makes the Tumbler Ridge area the top destination for snowmobiling in the Northeast.

Objective: To continue to market and develop snowmobiling by non-residents in the area and to explore the development of commercial guided snowmobiling activities.

Supporting Infrastructure: The Tumbler Ridge area has an excellent trail network to support snowmobiling. Recently, the community has seen the establishment of a snowmobiling guiding venture.

Ancillary Services: Non-resident snowmobilers typically utilize the existing accommodation and service sector in Tumbler Ridge. This will help support this portion of the economy. Currently the local accommodation sector is often at capacity. An increase in tourism activity may encourage a new entrepreneur or community group to explore creating new accommodations.

Development Tasks for Developing and Maintaining Infrastructure: The community has been working proactively to support snowmobiling tourism locally for several years. However, to ensure that business opportunities are maximized, the community may want to consider the following tasks:

- Work towards identifying and coordinating appropriate commercial snowmobiling use with recreational snowmobile interests to mitigate potential over-use issues. For example, the local snowmobile club may want to explore obtaining a commercial tenure on specific trails to ensure a balance between commercial and recreation use is maintained.
- Ensure the local business community, the District, and the snowmobile club are communicating and partnering on the key tasks required to maintain the trail network in excellent condition. For example, trail grooming is an on-going and often costly activity for local snowmobile clubs and where commercial use is high the potential to deplete the resources and volunteer effort of the local snowmobile club can occur. However, without proper trail maintenance the satisfaction of non-resident snowmobilers will decline.

Development Tasks for Promotion and Business Development: The community may want to explore deriving more direct economic benefits from the commercial snowmobile potential in the area and should consider the following tasks:

- Explore the local interest in developing high-end commercial snowmobiling in the area.
- Work with local interests to explore the opportunity to expand guide snowmobile opportunities locally.

- Explore developing a comprehensive and detailed marketing strategy for commercial snowmobiling and investigate partnering with other organizations to raise the profile of snowmobiling locally.
- Engage national and international adventure tourism business in discussions regarding the potential to partner on snowmobile products in the Tumbler Ridge area. This will require persistence on the part of Tumbler Ridge as it will take time to develop the appropriate relationships.

Promotion and Business Development Associated with Area Hiking Trails - Through the efforts of local community groups, the Tumbler Ridge area now has a network of hiking trails. These trails provide access to a variety of different natural features including unique interpretive opportunities from dinosaur tracks to alpine ecosystems to waterfalls. The Wolverine Nordic and Mountain Society has worked on the development of many of the trails and access development in the area while the Mistahaywa Wayatinaw Tourism Cooperative has been exploring interpretative tourism opportunities.

Objective: To raise the profile of the trail systems and to explore the development of touring business and activities to better capitalize on the visitors that do come to the area.

Supporting Infrastructure: The Tumbler Ridge area has an excellent trail network. The Kinuseo Falls are already a major attraction and known as a must see on the Alaska Highway Route drawing visitors into the area.

Ancillary Services: If visitors stay in the area they will typically utilize the existing accommodation and service sector in Tumbler Ridge. However, it is often the case that many summer visitors travelling the Alaskan Highway route travel virtually self-contained with motor homes and RVs.

Development Tasks: The community has established significant trail infrastructure to some excellent wilderness features. The community now needs to better capitalize on the business opportunities and economic benefits that can be derived from the trail systems and may want to consider the following tasks:

- Work with the Wolverine Nordic and Mountain Society, Mistahaywa Wayatinaw Tourism Cooperative and other local stakeholders to identify areas that would be most appropriate for commercial activities.
- Clearly document these opportunities and undertake preliminary assessment of the specific opportunities.
- Identify interest among local entrepreneurs to undertake the ventures with the best potential.
- Work with the local entrepreneurs to connect with the appropriate regulatory agencies and assist with establishment of tenure for specific activities. (The entrepreneur would be responsible for the development of his /her business plan).
- Undertake further promotion and trail signage to support the raising of the profile of the local trails and the wilderness features.

Revisit the Development of a Destination Lodge [29] - The economic development strategy completed for Tumbler Ridge in 2000 and more recent Community Resource Board planning both identified the development of a Destination Lodge as a key initiative. As well, in recent discussions with local stakeholders the need for additional accommodation has been repeatedly identified. A destination lodge would help with the transition from having the wilderness products available for tourists to deriving significant economic benefit from visitors to the area.

Objective: To diversify the local accommodation and begin developing higher-end adventure tourism products that could be linked to a destination lodge.

Infrastructure Status: Currently there is limited accommodation available in Tumbler Ridge. Of this none would be considered to be exclusively focused on the higher-end adventure tourism traveller. In fact, the one hotel in Tumbler Ridge is often booked with industrial work crews during key tourism periods.

Development Tasks: The development of a destination lodge would follow the current tasks already identified in earlier community planning work. However, the community may also want to consider the following tasks:

- Identify how the development of adventure tourism products would be best linked to the destination resort and what type of partnerships would be ideal. For example, would the community want the destination lodge owner to also own and operate specific commercial tenures. If not, do they feel they can find an investor to still undertake the investment. From a market perspective, the best potential for lodge development in Tumbler Ridge is in snowmobiling.
- Explore how other successful destination lodges have been developed. There are several in the Kootenays catering to skiing activities while coastal BC has numerous fishing and wilderness experience destination lodges in operation.
- Undertake the development of viability assessment for a specific opportunity in Tumbler Ridge.
- If the assessment proves a destination lodge locally is viable, develop a destination lodge attraction team.
- Work with BCAL to identify and pre-qualify specific Crown land sites that would be most suitable for development. Such a proactive approach has been employed in other areas of the province like Valemount and has given the local community a chance to define development parameters in advance.
- Develop a prospectus outlining the destination lodge opportunity and begin to actively network and market the opportunity.
- Work with interested investors in ensuring the destination lodge becomes a reality in Tumbler Ridge (the individual operator would be responsible for the business plan).

Comprehensive Tourism Marketing Strategy - Several groups and organizations have expressed an interest in tourism development and marketing. The District of Tumbler Ridge has been working with various groups in the marketing and promotion of tourism activities. However, to better promote the area a more strategic approach to marketing may be helpful.

---

[29] Ference Weicker & Company (June 2000), ***District of Tumbler Ridge: Diversification Study*** and Tumbler Ridge Community Resource Board's tourism priority setting process.

Objective: To maximize the efficiency and impact of each tourism dollar spent by the District and the local tourism operators.

Status: Currently the District and individual operators undertake marketing and promotion activities; however, these activities are not necessarily coordinated or strategically targeted.

Development Tasks: Tourism development locally could be supported by a more strategic approach to tourism marketing which might include the following tasks:

- Identify the tourism marketing expenditures made by tourism interests in Tumbler Ridge.
- Assess the value-for-money of current investments by undertaking a marketing audit.
- Explore strategic areas for marketing Tumbler Ridge tourism products.
- Explore cross-promotional efforts among the various groups.

6.3.4 Dawson Creek and Area Action Plan

- ***Local Tourism Overview:***

Table 6-4 outlines the most recent census information on the labour force for Dawson Creek and Pouce Coupe. The labour force data does not specifically identify the tourism workforce as it is spread across several service producing categories. Overall, between 1996 and 1986 the labour force in Dawson Creek and Pouce Coupe has increased by approximately 10 percent with the goods producing sector and the service producing sector both increasing in size.

The primary sectors of the labour force supported by tourism industry include accommodation, food and beverage services, collectively these sectors have actually declined slightly between 1986 and 1996. However, growth in the retail sector, which is typically dependent to some degree on tourism, has moved in the opposite direction showing growth between 1986 and 1996.

The recent tourism inventory of the Dawson Creek Forest District identified 73 tourism related businesses and operations in the Dawson Creek area. Of these, there are 28 are accommodation providers, six RV and campground operations, eight cultural and museum attractions, five travel agents and information centres, four air service, and four guiding and touring companies, and the remainder, provide various attractions and tourism support services.

Table 6-4: Labour Force Trend for Dawson Creek and Pouce Coupe (1986, 1991 and 1996)

Goods Producing	**1986**	**1991**	**1996**	**% Change (1986-96)**
Agriculture, Fishing and Trapping	125	155	155	+24%
Logging and Forestry Industries	125	125	185	+48%
Mining	210	165	175	-17%
Manufacturing Industries	300	430	415	+38%
Construction	495	540	400	
Total Goods Producing	**1,255**	**1,415**	**1,325**	**+6%**
Service Producing				
Transportation	265	360	310	+17%
Communications and Utilities	210	265	155	-26%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	240	240	320	+33%
Government Services	1,170	1,550	1,460	+25%
Wholesale and Retail	1,345	1,265	1,285	-4%
Business, Personal, and Other Services	470	310	735	+56%
• Amusement & Recreation Services	---	25	100	
• Other Business & Services	---	285	635	
Accom., Food & Beverage Services	590	500	565	-4%
• Accommodation services	---	155	165	
• Food and Beverage services	---	345	400	
Total Services Producing	**4,290**	**4,490**	**4,830**	**+12%**
Industry Not Classified	170	215	170	
Total Labour Force	**5,715**	**6,120**	**6,325**	**+10%**

Source: Statistics Canada - 1996, 1991, and 1986 Census.

- ***Community Tourism Development Efforts***

Recently Dawson Creek and area has been actively planning and implementing tourism development initiatives. Some of the specific initiatives include:

Alaska Highway Interpretative Centre - In 2000, Dawson Creek & District Chamber of Commerce undertook a business plan for financing the development and operation of the Alaska Highway Interpretive Centre in Dawson Creek. Unfortunately the study indicated that the original concept for an interpretive centre was not viable. However, several concepts associated with interpretative theming remain of interest in the community.

Equestrian Multiplex - The Peace River Regional District is currently exploring the feasibility of establishing a Multi Purpose Exhibition Complex in the Dawson Creek area. The feasibility study will examine opportunities to develop a multi-use facility that could be utilized for a variety of purposes and events including equine, agriculture, recreation, sport, tourism and other activities. The study will also examine potential programs that could be supported by such a facility such as agri-tourism.

Dawson Creek Tourism Planning - In January 2001, tourism stakeholders working with the council of Dawson Creek undertook a focused tourism planning session. Several key items and action steps were identified for immediate implementation to assist with developing the tourism sector locally. To act upon the priorities the City of Dawson Creek has made resources available to hire a tourism coordinator and this person will be in place shortly. The key goals and objectives identified included:

- Improve tourism attractions in Dawson Creek by:
  - Increase tourism-related entertainment and special events; and
  - Producing half and full day local and regional tours.
- Improve tourism promotion in Dawson Creek by:
  - Developing an integrated marketing initiative for Dawson Creek;
  - Developing a positive marketing campaign highlighting the good driving condition of the Alaska Highway;
  - Encouraging community businesses to participate in marketing ventures; and
  - Encouraging the Province and District to improve signing for town, information centre and parks.
- Improve tourism infrastructure in Dawson Creek by:
  - Encouraging the development of designated walking/cycling paths to downtown area from the campground; and
  - Developing of a series of walkways and paths around Dawson Creek to support visitor movements without moving their vehicles.
- Improve tourism hospitality in Dawson Creek by:
  - Implementing a tourism awareness of the importance of tourism and history of the area; and
  - Increase the utilization of SuperHost.
- Improve tourism services in Dawson Creek by:

- Upgrading of existing campground/RV sites to meet market demand;
- Improving consistent airline scheduling into Dawson Creek; and
- Exploring establishing RV rentals locally and encouraging fly/drive traffic to Alaska initiated from Dawson Creek.

- ***Recommendations***

Develop a Circle Tour along Highway 29, 97 and 52 – Dawson Creek is Mile 0 of the Alaskan Highway. Many recreational travellers from long-haul US markets make this journey, providing a significant economic benefit for Dawson Creek. However, these travellers are often passing through and spend only a small amount of time on their way to Alaska. As part of Dawson Creek's efforts to target visitors to stay longer, this circle tour should be developed and promoted with many of the natural features in the Dawson Creek area highlighted. A key part of this circle tour will be the promotion of the regionally significant Kinuseo Falls, which are located in close proximity to Tumbler Ridge.

Objective: To diversify the opportunities offered to road travellers coming to the Dawson Creek area by promoting Highway 29, 97 and 52 circle tour.

Infrastructure Status: The Highway infrastructure is in place; however, in certain portions of the highway system, issues have been raised about the condition of the roads and the design and safety of pullouts and the lack of signage.

Development Tasks: The development of a Highway circle tour might consider the following tasks:

- Determine the interest for developing a collaborative steering committee from the communities of Tumbler Ridge, Chetwynd, Dawson Creek and other key stakeholders (e.g. Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association).
- Undertake a gap analysis to look at issues of accommodation, campgrounds, and interpretative requirements to ensure the circle tour is convenient, safe, and interesting.
- Explore ways of improving the infrastructure in key areas and improving signage along the route. This would entail a strategy for dealing with the Ministry of Transportation and Highways which historically has demonstrated very limited understanding of tourism industry needs.
- Explore the development of a theme for the route and begin promoting and marketing the route.

Promotion of the Triangle Tour – The Triangle Tour offers agriculture and historical themes and includes the Kiskatinaw River Bridge, old sleigh trails that used to run from Fort St. John to Dawson Creek, a Hutterite Colony, and Van Han Apiaries.

Objective: To highlight and promote the history and culture of the area around Dawson Creek and encourage travellers to spend more time in the Dawson Creek area.

Infrastructure Status: The road infrastructure is in place and the area is already popular with Americans travelling to Alaska.

Development Tasks: The development of the Triangle Highway tour might consider the following tasks:

- Undertake a detailed inventory of historical sites and sites of interest along the route. Investigate the interest area residents have for participating in the development and promotion of the area as a tourism route.
- Survey travellers along the route on interpretative items they would be interested in visiting.
- Work with the agriculture community to develop agri-tourism products.
- Raise the visibility of historical sites in the area so travellers are more aware and can find them easily.
- Promote the activities along the Triangle route tour to travellers.

Explore Increased Development of Agri-tourism activities. Agri-tourism is a range of tourist activities associated with working farms and ranches. It may include such things as farm tours, special events with an agriculture theme, promotional events for farm products, and on-farm tourist accommodation.[30] In the Dawson Creek area, it could be used to provide tourism products that would encourage travellers to stay longer or come to the area as their target destination, as well, it could provide a diversity of income for local farms and ranches.

Objective: To diversify local farm and rancher income by creating viable tourism products that will encourage travellers to stay longer or target the Dawson Creek area as their final destination.

Infrastructure Status: The Dawson Creek area has a range of farms and ranches, hosts several farm related events each year and has dedicated infrastructure and interpretive features that could be better leveraged for tourism purposes.

Development Tasks: The development tasks that may be associated with agri-tourism might include:

- Determine if there is an interest among local farmers and ranchers to develop agri-tourism products.
- If there is, work with interested farmers and ranchers to identify agri-tourism products that may be in demand among tourists travelling in the region.
- Determine how agri-tourism products would link into other community tourism initiatives such as the Multi Purpose Exhibition Complex.
- Undertake a viability study on the agri-tourism activities.
- Develop a mentoring group to assist farmers with development tasks (the individual farmer would undertake their own business plan).
- Assist agri-tourism operators with developing a profile and marketing.

---

[30] Definition developed by Provincial Agricultural Land Commission and outlined in 1997 letter outlining Agri-tourist Accommodation Policy.

6.4 Regional Recommendations

In order to raise the awareness of tourism and efficiently support tourism operators in the region, collaboration among key stakeholders and the communities in the Dawson Creek Forest District should be a priority. The following outlines key strategy areas in which regional collaboration would be beneficial.

6.4.1 Coordinated Tourism Planning

A. Explore the **collaborative and comprehensive tourism strategy** for Northeastern BC. Currently, each community has identified specific tourism initiatives for their community. These communities could benefit by increasing their utilization of the existing regional tourism association to further link their local tourism priorities with the surrounding communities to create regional approaches and images for specific key tourism goals.

B. Investigate the development of a **natural history, cultural and heritage strategy**. This strategy could, in part, expand the interpretive opportunities to support the development of adventure tourism products.

C. Undertake a gap analysis of the **infrastructure requirements and improvements** required throughout the Dawson Creek Forest District to support specific types of tourism product development. Enter into discussions with existing tourism businesses and tourism associations operating inside the region, as well as those who might be enticed to expand operations to the region. Discuss the requirements each product sector has, ensure their needs are filled, and then actively promote the improvements that have been implemented.

6.4.2 Development of Strategic Partnerships

D. Explore **relationships with communities** adjacent to the Dawson Creek Forest District. For example, the Rocky Mountains are recognized internationally and draw visitors from around the world. Alberta communities in the Rockies could play an important role in the development, packaging, and connecting tourists to the region. In addition, the formation of strategic alliances provides access to funding opportunities for joint marketing and promotion initiatives such as those provided by the Canadian Tourism Commission.

E. Work with key senior government agencies to **plan and implement tourism** development. These agencies need to be active participants in addressing key local tourism issues. As well government agencies need to be encouraged to proactively inform local tourism operators and organizations of the programs, projects and government policies that impact tourism. Some of the key government agencies and service organizations that could play a role in the development of tourism initiatives and tourism business development include:

- British Columbia Assets and Lands Corporation
- Community Futures Development Corporations
- BC Ministry of Small Business Tourism and Culture
- BC Ministry of Forests
- BC Ministry of Transportation and Highways

- Northern Development Commission
- Forest Renewal BC
- Human Resources Development Canada BC Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers
- Tourism British Columbia
- BC Parks
- Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board
- Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association
- Northern British Columbia Tourism Association
- University of Northern British Columbia
- Northern Lights College

F. A positive relationship with federal, provincial, and municipal or local governments is essential to creating a favourable investment and business climate and to foster the timely development of tourism products in the Dawson Creek Forest District. Responsibility and resources should be identified to **undertake liaison activities** between government agencies and the local tourism and community interests in order to:

- Educate and inform regulatory agencies of tourism development priorities in the communities on the region. With the regulatory agencies it is important to develop an open and on-going rapport as to the community needs and objectives.
- Develop a local understanding of regulatory agencies' requirements, and an understanding of the appropriate processes for new development from municipal, provincial, and federal perspectives. Maintaining on-going communications with regulatory agencies will assist with understanding how regulatory decisions are made, and develop the relationships required to overcome development barriers.
- Educate and inform funding agencies as to the activities and priorities of the local tourism sector. This will assist funding agencies with a traditional focus of participation in fishery, forestry and other primary resource-based initiatives to become more comfortable with the process of tourism development. It may also allow them to be more proactive in their participation and allow the community to directly introduce individual tourism developers to key funding agencies to explore project development opportunities.

6.4.3 Tourism Business and Product Development

G. Support business development of local tourism sector opportunities by establishing a group of **business mentors and local financial experts** to advise on the issues and requirements of securing financing. Securing financing for entrepreneurs who wish to operate tourism businesses will be challenging. Many traditional lending institutions do not like to lend to ventures located in remote areas of British Columbia. The local mentors and financial experts could:

- Consider the local merits of establishing a local Community Venture Capital Corporation (through the Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers) which could further increase the access to capital for tourism related businesses.
- Assist with the development of a network of venture capital avenues and alternative financing opportunities for tourism businesses.

- Educate local financial agencies as to the potential and opportunities within the local tourism sector and work towards informing the financial community around issues of perceived and real risks in the tourism sector.
- Explore the development of lending circles to support tourism business start-up.

H. Work with the Community Futures Development Corporation of Peace-Liard and Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association to ensure **up-to-date tourism information** is in place to support local tourism business development. For example, there many sources of tourism data such as research done by the Canadian Tourism Commission. To access as an individual could be very time consuming. However, by ensuring it is in one place locally and up-to-date would ensure businesses are getting the best data possible for key business decisions.

I. Work towards identifying and developing a **code of ethics** for tourism operators involved with the various product areas offered in the region. Provincial standards and standards developed by industry associations in other jurisdictions should provide excellent guidance to these efforts. Locally the Muskwa-Kechika Trust Fund supported initial work looking at backcountry tourism ethics for this new Management Area. By adhering to a set of standards, tourism operators in the Dawson Creek Forest District will ensure that they are delivering a top quality product. Currently the Northern Lights College is exploring eco-tourism courses and may be able to play a role in providing training in this area.

J. Explore with tourism business operators the **development of specific product packages** to be targeted at identified key markets. In order to properly market tourism products it is critical to have well defined products and services.

K. Establish a task force to explore the opportunities and disadvantages for local operators to develop **joint ventures and partnerships** with larger tourism companies from outside the region. Many tourism opportunities require specialized skills, experience with specific market networks and significant capital investment. Local resources should be identified to guide exploration of the potential for joint ventures with larger more experienced ventures from outside the region. At a minimum, proponents of a new tourism business should be encouraged to approach existing businesses offering similar products to gain insight into the needs and markets of that product sector.

6.4.4 Develop and Maintain Transportation Infrastructure for Tourism

L. Raise the awareness of the importance of the local road infrastructure in the region for tourism purposes. Work with local, provincial, and federal governments to identify and implement priority **highway maintenance** and upgrading.

M. Work with **transportation providers** and the Council of Tourism Associations of British Columbia to ensure that public air and bus linkages are complimentary and supportive of the region's tourism industry. Investigate key issues such as service, prices and schedules. Explore ways to reestablish service such as the recently terminated commercial bus service to Tumbler Ridge.

N. Investigate the development of **rail passenger service** to the region. Rail travel by tourists has been enjoying good growth in BC in recent years and with the reduction in coal and forest product shipments in northern BC and the talk of developing an Alaskan rail line, railways may be interested in exploring new viable business opportunities in the region.

6.4.5 Ensure Effective and Efficient Marketing

O. Focus on **regional marketing and explore development of a regional image** by undertaking group marketing of the unique features of the Dawson Creek Forest District. Efforts should be coordinated with the Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association, the Northern BC Tourism Association and the Branding of the Peace Initiative to ensure connectivity. Tourism proponents can create an image that will raise the profile of the Dawson Creek Forest District to compete with other global destinations that feature wilderness or outdoor experiences.

P. Work with Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association to form strategic partnerships with regional tourism associations to identify new ways and approaches to coordinate and develop additional resources for marketing efforts. Northern BC with its small population base is at a disadvantage when it comes to marketing resources typically available for marketing efforts. A more coordinated approach would ensure that resources are efficiently and effectively utilized by:

- Leveraging regional marketing funding from funding agencies and surrounding organizations by developing partnerships and strategic alliances to pool resources for the area. Communities should explore ways of supporting existing efforts by Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association and Northern BC Tourism Association to collaboratively bring additional marketing resources into the area.
- Ensuring packaging of complimentary products – tourism packaging and marketing of tourism packages are closely tied and having several operators combine their efforts could be beneficial.
- Liaising with communities, Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association and other tourism stakeholders to coordinate the targeting of tourism resources at trade shows and other marketing events to ensure efficient marketing expenditures.
- Making a concerted effort to provide tourism organizations with current information which can be submitted to media outlets, tourism magazines and major tourism operators on a consistent basis. This allows local operators to capture free advertising and attention. Locally, the Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association will be attending Canada's Media Marketplace in New York with Northern BC Tourism Association to interview travel media. The Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association needs unique local tourism stories from the communities to capture the interest and generate excitement among the numerous representatives associated with these types of events.

Creative and Collaborative Marketing

Sun Peaks, located just outside of Kamloops, has helped put that community on the North American map through a partnership with MuchMusic. For the past two years MuchMusic has hosted SnowJob – a music event that draws several music bands to the resort town. This event generates national interest from many media sources and parts of the event are televised on MuchMusic.

7 Appendix 1 – Data Collection Results

7.1 Survey Methodology

Sue Kenny, with assistance from Lions Gate Consulting, was responsible for developing the list of tourism operators, coordinating the mail-out survey, conducting survey follow-up, compiling the survey results, and maintaining community liaison.

7.1.1 Operator List

One of the project tasks was to identify all businesses offering tourism-related services in the study area. The list of known tourism operators was generated by Sue Kenny and Lions Gate Consulting Inc. The 1996 Tourism Resource Inventory (TRI) for the Northeast had no known operator data so a reference list was compiled from Tourism British Columbia publications (2001 *Accommodation Guide* and 2001 *Tourism Product Guide*), regional guidebooks and publications, the regional phone directory, Internet search, names passed on by tourism operators and the local knowledge of the consulting team. The Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association provided much needed assistance on the database. In addition to researching names and addresses, some attribute information such as the number of accommodation units were recorded from secondary sources where available. Attribute data was recorded using the Resources Inventory Committee (RIC) Standard – *Digital Data Standard for a Community Based Tourism Opportunity Study*, March 2000.

7.1.2 Mail Out / Fax Survey

Operator information was gathered using a mail and fax survey, with the survey instrument provided by MSBTC, customized as needed. The survey included a small-scale map, allowing operators to identify areas of interest to them. Surveys and relevant maps were faxed or mailed to the tourism operators. Telephone calls followed to remind the operator of the survey and follow up calls were initiated if the survey had not been returned. Attempts were made to undertake the survey by telephone. Areas of operation were verified to establish pertinence to this survey for newly identified operators. Once collected, attribute information was entered into a digital spreadsheet. A record of contacts has been included on the following pages.

7.1.3 Results

Our initial research generated a list of 150 which was supplemented by another five names prior to verification. Further research indicated 18 operators were either no longer in business, had duplicate entries, or were not correctly identified as being in the tourism business. The result was a final population of 132 tourism operators based in or using the resources found in the study area. All operators were sent a mail or fax survey. Thirty-nine percent (51) of the total number of tourism operators in the study area responded to the surveys or telephone interviews. Information regarding operators who did not participate in the survey was extracted from secondary sources. The distribution of responses were as follows:

Response Category	**Number**	**Percent**
Survey population	132	100%
Non-response		
Contact attempt via telephone but no response	3	2.3%
Did not contact/did not attempt to contact	3	2.3%
Sent survey and made telephone call – no response	75	56.8%
Total non-response and non-response rate	**81**	**61.4%**
Telephone interview completed	30	22.7%
Returned completed survey	21	15.9%
Total response and response rate	**51**	**38.6%**

7.2 Respondent Profile

The following set of tables shows the distribution of tourism operators in the study area by various categories of operation. A number of operators offer two or more types of tourism activities and in some cases several distinct types of tourism operations. Each is given an equal weight, resulting in totals greater than the total number of operators in the study area.

Accommodations		
Code	**Description**	**Total**
A01	Hotel	**10**
A02	Motel	**16**
A03	RV/Campground	**18**
A04	Lodge/Resort	**5**
A05	Camps	**9**
A07	Cabins/Cottages	**2**
A09	Bed and Breakfast	**13**
A11	Hostel	**1**
		74

Attractions		
Code	**Description**	**Total**
T01	Museum	**8**
T02	Arts/Culture/Heritage	**8**
T03	Recreation	**8**
T07	Nature	**1**
T08	Sports	**2**
T09	Golf - public	**1**
T11	Golf - semi-private	**5**
T12	Marina - public	**1**
T14	Ski Facility	**3**
T16	Rental	**9**
		46

Guides/Tour Operators		
Code	**Description**	**Total**
R01	Guide-outfitter	**6**
R02	River rafting	**1**
R05	Air tours/charters	**5**
R07	Kayak/Canoe	**2**
R10	Heli ski/hike	**1**
R11	Hiking/Mountaineering/ Nature	**4**
R14	Snowmobile	**2**
R17	Horse and Trail	**1**
R18	Ski Touring	**1**
R19	Other	**3**
		26

Transportation		
Code	**Description**	**Total**
P05	Air	**2**
P08	Bus	**2**
P19	Taxi	**1**
P20	Car Rental	**1**
		6

7.3 Study Contacts

Study Contacts	
Name	**Organization**
Andy Ackerman	BC Environment
Fred Banham	Administrator, District of Tumbler Ridge
Jenny Biem	Tumbler Ridge Diversification Society
Tim Caton	Peace River Regional District
Wayne Dahlen	Dawson Creek Chamber of Commerce
Carmen Didier	Sukunka Wilderness Backcountry Expeditions
Steven Firth	Urban Systems (consultant working for Hudson's Hope)
Lorraine Funk	Community Connections Newspaper
Glenda & Howie Gover	Chetwynd Residents
Elvin Gowman	BC Assets and Lands
Ed Grifone	Urban Systems (consultant working for Chetwynd)
Janet Hartford	Local Historian, Tumbler Ridge
Kathy Hood	TR Marketplace
Dean	Hyper Toys, Dawson Creek
Brett	Hymark, Chetwynd
Clay Iles	Mayor, District of Tumbler Ridge
Charlie Lasser	Mayor of Chetwynd
Leslie Lax	Northern Commissioners Office
Bill Lindsay	Administrator, District of Hudson's Hope
Clay & Jill Mason	Mistahaywa Wayatinaw Tourism Cooperative
Alex Maxwell	Chetwynd Northern Lights College
Katie Moen	District of Hudson's Hope
April Moi	Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association
Ray Proulx	Councillor, District of Tumbler Ridge – Tourism Portfolio
Mike Redfern	Administrator, District of Chetwynd
Don Roberts	BC Parks
Al Rodine	Ministry of Forests
Elsie Ross	Artic Cat Dealership Owner
Tim Ross	President of Chetwynd Snowmobile Club
Mike Sebold	Community Futures
Kevin Sharman	Tumbler Ridge
Jason Shembri	Tumbler Ridge Diversification Society
Murray Smith	Mistahaywa Wayatinaw Tourism Cooperative
Fred Walkley	Tumbler Ridge

7.4 Survey Respondents

Survey Respondents

Company/Organization	City	Company/Organization	City
Peace Reach Adventures	Aldergrove	Sewell Valley Game Farm	Doe River
Peace Country Canoe & Kayaking	Beaverlodge	Northern Rockies Alaska Hwy. Tourist Assoc.	Fort St. John
Aspen Mobile Estates	Chetwynd	Polly Ranch B&B	Groundbirch
Chetwynd Tourist Info Centre	Chetwynd	Fort Sasquatch East Pine Lodge	Groundbirch
Highland Helicopters Ltd.	Chetwynd	BC Hydro/WAC Bennett Dam	Hudson's Hope
Pine Cone Motor Inn	Chetwynd	Hudson's Hope Ski Association	Hudson's Hope
Stagecoach Motor Inn	Chetwynd	Peace Reach Bed & Breakfast	Hudson's Hope
Sukunka Wilderness Backcountry Expeditions	Chetwynd	Peace Williston Outfitters Ltd.	Hudson's Hope
Swiss Inn	Chetwynd	Topo's Bed & Breakfast	Hudson's Hope
Airport Inn	Dawson Creek	Valley Manor	Hudson's Hope
Central Motel	Dawson Creek	Carbon Lake Lodge	Moberly Lake
Corlane Sporting Goods	Dawson Creek	Pouce Coupe Pioneer Inn	Pouce Coupe
Dawson Creek Ski & Recreation Assoc.	Dawson Creek	Village of Pouce Coupe Regional Park Bisette Creek	Pouce Coupe
Dawson Creek Visitor Info Centre	Dawson Creek	Community Recreation Centre	Tumbler Ridge
Diamond Ranch	Dawson Creek	Happy Heart Bed & Breakfast	Tumbler Ridge
George Dawson Inn	Dawson Creek	Lions Campground District of Tumbler Ridge	Tumbler Ridge
Hyper Toys	Dawson Creek	Mistahaywa Wayatinaw Tourism Cooperative	Tumbler Ridge
Inn on the Creek	Dawson Creek	Monkman Way RV Park District of Tumbler Ridge	Tumbler Ridge
Kechika & Turnigan Adventures Ltd.	Dawson Creek	Mountain Base Camp	Tumbler Ridge
Ken Borek Air Ltd.	Dawson Creek	Murray River Adventure Tours	Tumbler Ridge
Kiwanis Performing Art Centre	Dawson Creek	RidgeRider Snowmobile Club	Tumbler Ridge
Northern Lights B&B	Dawson Creek	The Lair Bed & Breakfasts	Tumbler Ridge
Northern Lights RV Park	Dawson Creek	Top Of the World Tours	Tumbler Ridge
Northward Air Ltd.	Dawson Creek	Tumbler Ridge Inn	Tumbler Ridge
Ramada	Dawson Creek	Tumbler Ridge Library	Tumbler Ridge
Treks Canada Adventures	Dawson Creek		

8 Appendix 2 – Dawson Creek TOS Survey

BRITISH COLUMBIA

MINISTRY OF SMALL BUSINESS, TOURISM AND CULTURE

TOURISM POLICY AND LAND USE BRANCH

TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES STUDY

OPERATOR SURVEY

The Dawson Creek Forest District has been selected by the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture (MSBTC) for completion of a Tourism Opportunity Study (TOS). We are seeking your input as a local tourism operator in the completion of the TOS for your area.

A TOS is a study sponsored by the MSBTC – with partner agencies - to update inventory information on current tourism/ecotourism operators in the study area and their key geographical areas of interest/use, and (ii) to examine a region's potential for further development in the ecotourism sector. The study is undertaken at a regional level, usually a forest district, to coincide with other land use planning processes and resource management agency boundaries. The information derived from a TOS is shared with several groups. Crown land managers are provided the updated inventory information so that they can include tourism interests in their own land management and development planning processes. Local economic and tourism development agencies use TOS information to assist with tourism marketing and economic development efforts. Finally, MSBTC will use the TOS results to support planning decisions by all agencies affecting the tourism industry. On completion of the TOS, the final report and data will be made available through MSBTC and the local regional tourism association.

This survey is a critical component of the TOS and is undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture (MSBTC) by a consulting team led by Lions Gate Consulting Inc. The survey is comprised of two parts : Part I (questions 1 – 5) assists in updating tourism operator and resource inventory information; Part II (questions 6 – 9) seeks your input and opinions on key issues affecting ecotourism development in your region.

Please answer only those questions that apply to your business Information from previous inventories, where available, is shown in this form. Please make any updates, additions or corrections required.

Organization Name «NAME»

Contact «CONTACT»

Mailing Address «ADDRESS1»

Physical Address (if different from above) «ADDRESS2»

City, Prov «CITY», «PROV» **Postal Code** «CODE» **Phone** «PHONE1»

Fax «FAX» **E-Mail** «EMAIL» **Web Site** «WEB_SITE»

To return the survey, please use any of the following methods:

Mail to:	**Fax to:**	**For a personal interview call:**
Dawson Creek Tourism Opportunity Study c/o Sue Kenny Box 2243 Tumbler Ridge, BC V0C 2W0	Attn Sue Kenny (250) 242-3993 Or Attn Jackie Kjos (250) 827-3679	Sue Kenny (250) 242-4670 Or Jackie Kjos (250) 827-3649

BRITISH COLUMBIA

MINISTRY OF SMALL BUSINESS, TOURISM AND CULTURE
TOURISM POLICY AND LAND USE BRANCH

TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES STUDY

OPERATOR SURVEY

1. If your company is a:

- Accommodation facility/property manager, proceed to # 2.
- Tour operator (coach, adventure, etc) proceed to #3.

2. **If you are based in or use the district** and offer **overnight** accommodation facilities, please indicate for each type of facility you operate, the following information.

Type of Facility	**Accommodation units (rooms)**	**Campground Sites**
Hotel / Motel		
Condominium		
Cabins	(# beds or cabins)	
Lodge / Resort		
Fishing / Guide Camp	(# beds or tents)	
Bed &Breakfast		
Vessel Lodge / Float house	(# beds or rooms)	
	# RV sites	**# Campsites**
RV Park / Campground	with hook-ups no hook-ups	
	Moorage feet	**# Boats**
Moorage space		
	Number of Berths	
Charter Boat(s)		

3. What are the **primary activities** provided by your operation in the district (Examples include: trail riding, canoeing, fishing).

4. What are the **secondary activities** provided by your operation (A secondary activity would not be supplied without the presence of the primary activity. A secondary activity does not have to be guided, e.g. wildlife watching, camping).

5. Please indicate the number of people that you will employ in 2000 for the operations in the district for the following categories:

________ Full time year round
________ Full time seasonal
________ Part time year round
________ Part time seasonal
________ Total employees (persons)

Do you employ local residents? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how many of the above employees would be local residents ________?

6. On the attached map, please indicate the location of the **key geographical areas**; **resources** (i.e. trails); **and/or natural features** (i.e. waterfalls); that you frequently use in your operations. (NB : This information will be shared with Crown land managers so that they are aware of individual tourism operators' geographical areas of interest for agency consultation and referral purposes.)

Would you like the above information (responses to Questions 1 – 6) to be provided to your regional tourism association for marketing and tourist referral purposes ?

YES ____ NO ____

7. What are some of the key issues affecting tourism development in the Dawson Creek Forest District? You may wish to consider some of the outstanding strengths of the region, or perhaps factors, which are impeding or threatening further development. Table 1 provides some suggestions to assist with your response.

Table 1: Possible Issues and Opportunities for Tourism/Recreation Development

Natural features (e.g., mountains, lakes)	Resource/land use management or policy	Community attitude to tourism
Recreation features	Local availability of required supplies & services	Market and demand conditions
Seasonality or weather	Hospitality/amenities in nearby community(s)	Competition
Cultural or historical features	Accessibility from nearest community	Availability of capital
Current degree of development or utilization	Proximity to other attractions	Local/regional skills/labour market
Carrying capacity	Local economic development initiatives or office	Local/regional training capacity

8. What do you feel are the best new potential tourism development opportunities in the ecotourism/adventure travel sector in the Dawson Creek Forest District?

9. What do you believe should be done to encourage further development in the ecotourism and adventure travel segment of tourism?

Are there specific actions you would like to see undertaken in your district?

Further comments:

Thank you for your participation.

Should you have any questions regarding this survey or the Tourism Opportunity Study in general please contact :

Steve Nicol	Sue Kenny	Jackie Kjos	SARAH DOE
Lions Gate Consulting	Tumbler Ridge, BC	JK Solutions	MSBTC
Vancouver, BC	(250) 242-4670	Fort St. John , BC	Victoria, BC
(604) 733-5622		(250) 827-3649	(250) 387-6487

9 Appendix 3 - Product Pre-feasibility Profiles

There are 8 product profiles covered in this appendix. The purpose of the profiles is to give readers some understanding of the issues surrounding business development. The main report dealt with the two key issues of land/resource capability and community capacity for tourism development. This section takes a business focus by assessing other inputs an operator requires in order to create a competitive and successful commercial recreation venture. The products are:

- Canoeing/kayaking
- Hiking
- Snowmobiling
- Ski touring
- Cross-country skiing
- Road touring
- Lodge/resort
- Huts

Each profile consists of an assessment of market, locational, infrastructure, financial and business development issues. Key success factors and complementary activities are also discussed. Readers are reminded that the following profiles are general in nature. Further assessment and planning is required to determine the actual feasibility of product development in the Dawson Creek Forest District.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">Canoeing/Kayaking</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Product Description</td><td colspan="4">Canoe/kayak tour company.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Markets</td><td colspan="4">Participants/soft adventurers from BC, short-haul markets (Canada and US) and overseas markets (Germany).
Enthusiasts/hard adventurers (BC and Alberta residents).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Competition</td><td colspan="4">There is extensive competition regionally and across Canada for canoeing and kayaking. Canadian Rockies, Kootenays, Thompson Okanagan and the Cariboo offer quality river/lake experiences, with similar or better features.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Overall Potential</td><td colspan="4">Long-term trends show rising participation rates among North American markets, particularly among soft adventure participants rather than the extreme enthusiast market. All of these markets are seeking a broader outdoor adventure experience and may decide to participate in recreational paddling once in the region. The Dawson Creek FD can offer a range of close-in/remote adventures and is very well positioned to attract more visitors.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Location Needs</td><td colspan="4">For river activities, access to single and multi-day canoe/kayak routes, flat water routes and fast water routes, varying grades of water for all levels of expertise, play areas and water suitable for instruction are all important considerations.
For lakes, larger lakes with variable shorelines, and attractive scenery with little sign of human presence are the primary attractants for this activity. Generally, lakes that permit half-day to full day paddling and enable participants to achieve a sense of isolation (including being away from other participants) are preferred. Smaller lakes can also have potential, but would require the presence of additional features to enhance the experience. Such features include historical or cultural sites, wildlife viewing, sandy beaches, waterfalls, fishing, etc.
Less modified landscapes are preferred to highly modified landscapes.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Issues</td><td>Licences & permits
Weather conditions</td><td>Fluctuating water levels on reservoirs</td><td>Environmental, wildlife and fishing guidelines</td><td>Good road access & egress points</td></tr>
<tr><td>Infrastructure</td><td colspan="4">Access for put- in and take-out
Campsites
Transportation access from staging area
Shuttling services
Accommodation and food service support
Trained guides & instructors</td></tr>
</table>

Financial	Low capital costs - Typically, to operate within established industry standards, maximum tour group size is ten guests with two guides, and using a mixed fleet of double and single kayaks or canoes. A fleet of 5 double and two single fiberglass kayaks, with all necessary kayaking equipment (paddles, PFDs, spray decks, pumps, and required safety equipment) would cost an operator between $25-30,000. Many companies also provide tents, sleeping pads, dry bags, paddling jackets or wetsuits, and all camp kitchen facilities (shelter, portable stove, pots, etc.). Start-up equipment needs and costs will vary depending on partnerships with other tourism product operators, and on the style and remoteness of the trips. Operators offering kayaking tours had annual revenues of approximately $120,000 in 1993, with approximately one third bringing in less than $50,000. The kayak business is very profitable because of lower-than-average operating expenses. The average outfit has 700 clients with an average daily revenue of $113 per traveller. The average trip length was 5.7 days.
Business Development	Instruction services are essential for a guiding outfit so having instructors with the ability to clearly explain, demonstrate and provide feedback and coaching is a benefit. This usually means instructors/guides who have proven certification and demonstrate an ability to teach. Nature observation, wildlife viewing and fishing are also attractants for these markets. The German market, especially, is interested in wildlife viewing. Whether canoeing or kayaking, product development has to incorporate some outstanding recreational feature, aesthetic appeal or valued secondary activity. Multi-activity packaging and interpretation is essential. More vertical integration of product design and marketing is required, including raising awareness of the potential of lakes and rivers among BC residents (i.e. enthusiasts who are activity-oriented travellers). Resource management has a significant impact on the marketability of canoeing and kayaking. The extensive evidence of industrial forestry has compromised the potential of some river sections. Visual quality is a very important attribute for this pursuit. Hydroelectric activity is a major consideration for river and lake product – water levels will influence how and where development can take place. The most reliable flow rates/levels for river activities are associated with fall to spring precipitation (which are also colder months). If an operator uses a specific land feature such as a beach or camp on a regular basis then CBR tenure will be required. Typically, conflicts with other users are low, but jet boats can be a problem in high use areas. People are generally looking for shorter trips, on average for 7 days when travelling abroad. Yield management for tour operators will be increasingly important as a result of running more numerous, short-term trips.

Key Success Factors	Having modern, well-maintained equipment is important. This will require ongoing upgrading to newer equipment, which is especially important for river kayaking. A variety of water classes will give an operator some flexibility when catering to markets. Good whitewater is essential for enthusiasts, while lower classes are needed when serving lower-skilled, soft adventurers. If waterflow is controlled by dams, a coordinated plan to match water conditions with planned usage is important. This means investing time and effort in developing the itineraries and routes for trips. There should be pre-prepared options in the event of poor weather. Put-in and take-out sites should be easily accessible while coordinated support should be in place for take-outs. Interpreters and guides with a thorough knowledge of the area and ability to convey this in an interesting and informative way will appeal strongly to the soft adventure market which is interested in more than the canoeing or kayaking activity itself. This also applies to food and accommodation planning, making sure that clients have been matched with the anticipated service expectations.
Complementary Activities	Natural and cultural features viewing. Heritage interpretation. Fishing. Camping. Hut systems.

Hiking	
Product Description	***Guided Interpretive hikes and nature tours.***
Markets	All markets, especially the soft adventure visitors among short-haul (Canada and US), long-haul (Canada and US) and overseas markets (Germany). Hiking enthusiasts (interpretive tours into new areas). Park visitors, including tour travellers. Seniors for Elderhostels Nature lovers of all ages
Competition	There is extensive competition regionally, nationally and internationally for travellers interested in pursuing hiking. The hiking enthusiast in pursuit of a challenging, wilderness trek product has a wide range of products and experiences to choose from. The national parks cater extensively to this market. Many communities and all parks have developed trail inventories and related services that create a safe and interesting product for the soft adventurer/participant.
Overall Potential	The potential for development in the region is average. There are high quality resources and visitor markets that place a high value on hiking activity. However, a lack of well known trail systems will limit development. Demand will continue to increase for hiking both as a primary activity and as a secondary activity in conjunction with other products. Because of its accessibility, low skill requirements, relative safety and instant appeal, growth rates among North American and European hiking markets are expected to continue to climb even as the overall population ages. The potential for commercial hiking tours spans a full range of options from multi-day trekking tours to short interpreted tours of the frontcountry.
Location Needs	Wilderness areas and parks. Trails and trail systems. High scenic and natural values. Wildlife and wildlife viewing opportunities. Natural habitats. Solitude.
Issues	Applicable licences and permits. Wildlife issues – most clients want to see bears. Conflicts on trails with other users.
Infrastructure	Well signed and maintained trails Roads for access Shuttle service Maps / information Certified hiking guides

Financial	Low capital costs – hiking and backpacking does not require a significant investment in equipment but trail and accommodation infrastructure is very important. Since the provision of these components can rarely be justified based on revenues available from hiking, multi-activity tourism has to be accommodated. The average Canadian tour operator offering hiking as the major activity had annual gross revenues of $167,000 in 1993. Almost two thirds of operators brought in less than $50,000 and this contributed to a low average gross margin of 6.9%, considerably less than other activities. With an average number of travellers of 1,390, this equated to about $120 in revenue per traveller.
Business Development	The average Canadian hiking tour operator employed five seasonal personnel in 1993, with the majority of operators have less than four staff. Trained interpreters/guides who are experts in the area and interact well with people are important. First aid training is also a factor for day-hikes as well as for overnight trips. Target future M-K park visitors, including tour travellers in promotional activities. Niche marketing (e.g. slide shows, local presentations, communication with community groups) should be used to increase regional awareness of newly developed hiking products. The operation should be flexible enough to offer day hikes as well as overnight trips. The latter will have to be pressed through tour wholesalers or retail tour operators. Day hikes can be directly marketed to regional visitors who have some flex time for a short excursion. Hiking tour routes have to be developed around highly scenic, natural and recreational, and/or heritage/cultural resources. The better the signage, parking, garbage disposal, washrooms, and interpretative facilities the better the trip experience will be for users. Quality map information and investment in facilities is also important. In order for a guiding operation to succeed, it must provide a value-added service that hikers cannot obtain through self-guided hikes. This means creating a high-end experience through linkages to cultural/heritage interpretation, wildlife viewing, meals and lodging. Develop specialized tours or specialize completely in a specific market segment such as women only, seniors or at-risk youth. Although hiking appeals to a wide range of people demographically, it is important to identify specific target markets and their distinct needs.
Key Success Factors	For soft adventure travellers, well-developed, relatively easy trails, in an uncrowded and pristine environment are preferred. Interesting features for nature and/or culture for day trips. Overnight trips need access to good camping or hut locations. Soft adventure travellers will prefer lodges/cabins while the enthusiast will prefer tenting. Offering activities which add an educational or recreational component such as nature interpretation and wildlife viewing and photography. This may include teaching participants how to minimize impact when hiking and camping in wilderness areas. Developing good routes for trips including contingency routes in case of poor weather conditions or other parties. Understanding, then exceeding, expectations of participants for meals. An operator should always enquire about dietary restrictions and preferences of participants before the trip and develop a meal plan accordingly. For soft adventure, inbound logistics are important – providing the right transportation from a primary site, to the staging area and beyond is critical. This will require detailed planning to ensure that the appropriate vehicles are available and supplies packed.
Complementary Activities	Accommodations Visitor Centre Locally focused booking / central registry agency

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">Snowmobiling</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Product Description</td><td colspan="4"><i>Snowmobile terrain complex (location for related special events).</i></td></tr>
<tr><td>Markets</td><td colspan="4">In BC, the regional and Canadian short-haul visitors comprise the majority of the snowmobile market. The best potential is within the regional market with a 500 mile radius, primarily Alberta. Participation by US and international visitors is minor. Soft-adventurers who are participating in other winter destination activities such as downhill and cross-country skiing are prime targets.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Competition</td><td colspan="4">Broad choice of destinations are available across the province.
Province-wide trail network will improve access to quality terrain in affected communities, but it will also increase participation.
For commercial operators, converting self-guided visitors to buyers of a commercial product will be a major challenge.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Overall Potential</td><td colspan="4">There is good resource attributes and snow conditions for snowmobiling throughout western portions of the District. The activity is growing extremely fast, perhaps more so than any other outdoor activity, motorized or non-motorized. The increased demand and use is coming from residents, regional visitors and short-haul visitors. The major limiting factors include distance from major regional markets and the lack of service infrastructure.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Location Needs</td><td colspan="4">A site should be 5 – 10 minutes from a town or service centre to take advantage of infrastructure, services such as fuel and mechanical, and hospitality (food, beverage, accommodation).
Site must have a variety of terrain (ups, downs, flats).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Issues</td><td>Business licence
Wildlife</td><td>Noise
Pollution</td><td>Zoning
Liability insurance</td><td>Access
Conflicting use</td></tr>
<tr><td>Infrastructure</td><td colspan="4">On site needs include concession, washroom facilities, storage, parking, signage etc.
A facility could be based on a commercial business, but for less developed areas it may be more practical to have the local snowmobile club manage the operation. A certain amount of sweat equity and volunteer time would be required to offset capital costs anyway.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Financial</td><td colspan="4">Moderate capital costs – a basic facility comprising trail building and minor service development would incur cash costs of at least $25,000 to $35,000 plus contributed equity in the form of volunteer labour.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Business Development</td><td colspan="4">The cooperation of local snowmobilers is essential as it will be difficult to justify the investment in facilities on a strictly commercial basis. Any development in a major community would automatically attract local users and may conflict with other possible uses (e.g. cross-country skiing).
A new facility could be based on an all-season product (e.g. ATVs, motor cross in the summer). Developing trails in co-operation with off-season users such as hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders would also facilitate development.</td></tr>
</table>

Key Success Factors	Access to high quality resources. Ensuring trails and play areas are well-maintained by working with local snowmobile clubs and associations. Improving infrastructure and hospitality services to encourage longer and more frequent trips. Working with government and tourism agencies as well as environmental groups to develop and promote the trail systems, avoid user conflicts and manage visitation to avoid carrying capacity constraints. Developing a code of conduct for safety and environmental concerns which is strictly adhered to.
Complementary Activities	Special events. Repair and maintenance services. Sales and rentals.

Ski Touring

Product Description	***Guiding ski touring services.***
Markets	Experienced/hard adventurers from all markets, with the best potential among short-haul US and Canadian markets. Participation rates are low but market demand is annually increasing. Good potential among soft adventurers (destination-oriented decision-makers) who may be introduced to ski touring given up-to-date ski technology, safe conditions and quality instruction.
Competition	There are several areas in BC and Alberta with quality ski touring terrain. Infrastructure is very well developed in the Canadian Rockies, clustered around the National Parks. Commercial operators will be challenged to attract clientele, because the park system, local alpine clubs and societies provide access to over 40 public backcountry huts to ski tourers at little or no cost.
Overall Potential	Demand is low but growing for this product. As skiing technology improves and as lift-service options expand, ski touring will become even more accessible to a broader market. Parks Canada has stated that there is potential for some immediate modest growth in the local, regional and international adventure recreation markets, principally among winter backcountry users. Promotional efforts could be focussed on the parks' high quality winter backcountry recreation opportunities in trying to convert more international visitors from touring travellers to ecotourists. The best potential for commercial development is in association with hut or lodge-based operations.
Location Needs	Available terrain within the parks system Good variety of terrain (beginner to expert, treed to alpine) Variety of access options (from roads, helicopter)
Issues	Requirement for certified & licensed guides Tenured access to large areas of varied terrain Wildlife conflicts Avalanche hazards Conflicts with other users
Infrastructure	Roaded access Backcountry huts and cabins Front-country food /accommodation services
Financial	Low capital costs – initial costs would be low comprising equipment and gear. If needed, transportation services could be contracted locally. Any hut or lodge development would add significantly to costs. The average Canadian tour operator offering ski touring as the major activity had annual gross revenues of $230,122 in 1993, with about 50% bringing in less than $50,000 annually. The gross margins are not that attractive, averaging 4.2% due to higher-than-average operational expenses. The average number of skiers per operation was 572, trip length was between 4 and 4½ days, and per day revenues approximately $100. This is believed to be a good representation of the BC sector as almost one half of all operators in the country are based in BC.

Business Development	Hiring qualified and certified guides and instructors is increasingly important as backcountry visitation increases and the risk to personal safety climbs. The vast majority of commercial ski tour operators use professionally certified adventure travel guides and/or tour leaders. Telemark skiing will become increasingly popular as will the overall market for Nordic skiing. This will create demand for good beginner instruction and also increase the importance of the accommodation and other facilities in attracting the broader market. Specific niche markets such as women-only clinics and tours have good potential for expansion. As user fees becomes more prevalent in backcountry areas, more operators may begin working with recreational skiers and clubs to maintain and enhance high quality areas. Providing courses packaged with rentals and guided tours will encourage beginners and casual participants to participate.
Key Success Factors	Good access to high quality terrain, including permits/tenure for secluded backcountry areas. For the destination-based traveller, high quality accommodation and support facilities. If specialized target markets are being attracted, then developing menu and accommodations have to be designed accordingly. High quality, well-maintained equipment, with a variety of sizes suitable for the family market. Ability to answer questions from both beginners and experts on equipment and trails in the area.
Complementary Activities	Development of temporary or permanent backcountry accommodations (tents/yurts, huts/cabins/lodges).

Cross-Country Skiing

Product Description	***Development of a long distance Nordic ski trail system and event sponsorship to attract skiers and promote spin-off benefits for the community (e.g. loppet).***
Markets	Participants and enthusiasts from BC and short-haul markets, especially Alberta. The US and overseas markets are limited, but downhill skiers of all geographic origins are a potential target. Families and local skiers. Racers and elite athletes. Destination skiers who want to try a variety of activities.
Competition	There are many well-established cross-country ski areas in BC and Alberta that offer similar terrain features and snow conditions and in some cases have superior infrastructure and amenities. There are 22 major races/loppets in BC this year, primarily in the Interior and the Okanagan.
Overall Potential	Long-term participation trends are only average, and the ability to stage events should be tied to a well-serviced Nordic centre which will have the capacity to deal with periodic increases in activity. According to Cross Country BC, "super events" could have some potential in the province, especially if they can appeal to the softer, beginner markets. Current loppets are top-down events geared toward the skilled enthusiast.
Location Needs	Requirement for a large, relatively flat area with good snow conditions and trails with a variety of terrain to meet the needs of beginners, intermediate and advanced skiers. Appropriate elevation for consistent snow conditions. Road access to at least one end of the trail system.
Issues	Tenure for use of public land or access/purchase of private land. Potential conflict with existing tenures and operators. Environmental and wildlife guidelines. Need to develop a trail complex more appropriate for racing.
Infrastructure	An organized, well designed and signed trail complex. Groomed trails. Warming hut facilities. Parking areas. Signage and maps. Fee collection and sales area. Ski patrol services. Grooming machines. Fuel, storage equipment and repair facilities. Event organization skills.
Financial	Moderate to high capital costs – a basic facility comprising trail building and minor service development would incur cash costs of at least $25,000 to $35,000 plus contributed equity in the form of volunteer labour. Land and warming hut costs would be in addition.

Business Development	Families with children value good instruction for both the children and adults, activity areas specifically for younger participants, good ski rental facilities in terms of equipment quality and size selection and dining facilities catering to families. Couples will value not only the facilities and trails for the ski activity itself, but the overall ambience of the area, including dining and accommodation. A potential area would have to be thoroughly researched and planned to ensure there is the right product/market mix. The initial focus would be on identifying potential locations for trails, assessing the feasibility of each (what type of skiing?), and deciding what is needed to develop and maintain the trail system. For events, cooperation and participation of local outdoor clubs is essential. Affiliations with official race or event series (e.g. BC Cup Series) is essential. Cross Country BC sanctions races in the province among its affiliated local clubs. National and international sanctions are also possible. As with any Cross-country ski product, there must be a favourable Nordic ski area or centre and the required hospitality services. A minimum of 30 km events are standard. Organizing the loppet is very important and in order to be sanctioned must be innovative and enhance the visitor experience to increase participation and visitation. An assessment of the most successful loppets in other parts of the world could be undertaken. Local members may have to be educated on the different "styles" and "formats" of cross country ski competitions and encouraged to put them into their event hosting plans before a loppet is considered. Cross Country BC's Western Edge loppet program may be a model for development.
Key Success Factors	Cross-country ski areas are being transformed into multi-use, winter playgrounds or resort areas to appeal to broader markets. There is unlikely to be sufficient demand for solely cross-country unless other activities are factored into the development. While natural features such as varied terrain are important, the built environment is critical – that means things like night lighting, parking, clear signage, high-quality and well-maintained equipment, transportation services and the availability of multi-activity packages can really broaden the appeal. A Nordic centre will not catch on in a big way unless there is extensive grooming on the trail system, perhaps using snowmobiles to pull small groomers. If trails are groomed skiers can count on good conditions and so will be more willing to drive to the area for a day or weekend. Trails for skiers could be utilized in the summer and off-seasons for hikers, bicyclists, horseback riders for connecting various components of a site. But trails would have to allow the user to view and visit a variety of ecological and natural features.
Complementary Activities	Trails can be used for mountain biking and hiking in the summer / shoulder seasons. Provision of accommodation and services.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">Road Tours</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Product Description</td><td colspan="4"><i>Highway Circle Tours.</i></td></tr>
<tr><td>Markets</td><td colspan="4">Primarily free independent regional and short-haul visitors from North American markets. This group tends to travel by private vehicle and will make a decision to participate in sightseeing and touring once in the region.
Secondarily, bus/motorcoach tour participants from the US, Europe and Asia.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Competition</td><td colspan="4">Many regions of the province and neighbouring Alberta have upgraded their hospitality infrastructure, services and attractions in recent years to pursue independent travellers.
A major source of competition is Alaska, the Yukon and Northwest BC. Many visitors to the Peace region are travelling to and from Alaska and do not have a lot of discretionary holiday time. Catering more to this market means providing experiences not available further north. As an alternative route to Alaska, Northwest BC is also a competitive threat.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Overall Potential</td><td colspan="4">The overall potential is good for the circle tour product, although the lack of growth in highway traffic counts suggests that communities will have to attract more of the existing visitor volumes if they are to increase activity.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Location Needs</td><td colspan="4">Access to a variety of frontcountry attractions and interpreted experiences.
High quality scenic viewing, wildlife viewing and sightseeing potential.
Convenient access to parks and natural areas in the mid-country.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Issues</td><td>Highway safety.</td><td>Road conditions.</td><td>Cooperation among municipalities.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Infrastructure</td><td colspan="4">Well-paved and maintained highway system.
Secondary road system that provides access to staging areas for day activities.
Pullouts and interpretive signage at regular intervals throughout the route.
Visible, efficient visitor information centres.
Well trained hospitality personnel.
Visitor attractions.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Financial</td><td colspan="4">Low capital costs (marketing) – Circle tours are primarily a marketing tool linking together a variety of existing features and attractions so as to encourage highway travellers to spend more time in the region.
High capital costs (infrastructure) – Developing and maintaining a quality highway system with the necessary interpretive facilities and visitor attractions requires a significant investment in public and private infrastructure.</td></tr>
</table>

Business Development	In order to compete in the tourist market regionally and worldwide, communities in the region will need to find ways to coordinate their development and marketing efforts that emphasize the area's distinctive features in order to draw tourists. Internet websites are being used to provide information that allows individual tourists to plan their own itineraries and make bookings for accommodations in advance. Tourists should able to develop self-guided tours. There should also be supporting material and interpretive/sightseeing facilities along the touring route to support this self-guided activity. More conventional collateral material such as brochures and maps/guides in cooperation with communities and operators throughout the route will be required. Another possible tool are cassettes and CDs with narrative tours of the area.
Key Success Factors	Successful road touring regions have made commitments to preserving their areas while developing roads for improved access. Corridor Management Plans (CMP) are being used to establish clear guidelines for development and activities along a route. Thus, while infrastructure development is important for tourism, communities and operators will need to also be aware of the need to act in a way that conserves and protects the area for sustainable development. There is a need to encourage input from various parties and develop a cohesive strategy for tourism along the touring route. The ability to tap into senior government funding for highway development and improvement projects could determine how successful communities will be for developing their road tour markets. Developing highways in scenic areas with regular points of interest en route. Having clear signage throughout the route. Developing an adequate number of multi-lane roads to handle traffic volumes and maintain safe conditions. Variety of accommodation, particularly for families.
Complementary Activities	Any accessible day-use outdoor activity. Local attractions such as museums, interpretive centres and resorts. Accommodation packages.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">Lodge/Resort</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Product Description</td><td colspan="4"><i>Lodge / Retreat / B&Bs.</i></td></tr>
<tr><td>Markets</td><td colspan="4">Soft adventure markets.
Seniors for Elderhostels.
Nature lovers of all ages.
North American, Europeans, Japanese, other international.
Destination market.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Competition</td><td colspan="4">Backcountry accommodation is not well developed in BC and, except in the case of fishing lodges, not that well marketed. There are some high quality lodge/resorts in the Canadian Rockies and on the Coast, but there is also room for expansion.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Overall Potential</td><td colspan="4">Lodge/resort accommodation supports the development of many other products assessed in this report which cater to the growing soft adventure market. In general, the hard adventure/enthusiast market will be satisfied with minimal infrastructure and the availability of camping facilities.
Lodges and resorts lodges are generally preferred by the experienced ecotourist, with 66 percent stating them as their preferred choice of accommodation. In contract, the general touring traveller prefers to stay in hotels/motels (56 percent).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Location Needs</td><td colspan="4">Access to different activities from accommodation location.
Roads / fly in areas / hike in.
Wilderness areas, parks, solitude, wildlife and wildlife viewing.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Issues</td><td>Crown lease if development is on public land.</td><td>Applicable licences and permits.</td><td>Capacity of trails, areas to accommodate activities.</td><td>Conflicts on trails with other users.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Infrastructure</td><td colspan="4">Trails or trail systems.
Roads for access or fly-in capabilities.
Availability of hospitality personnel.
Certified guides.
Access to municipal services or provision of same.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Financial</td><td colspan="4">Moderate to high capital costs – a wide range of capital costs are possible, depending on the nature and size of the facility, but generally this product calls for significant land and building development.
There are few statistics available for backcountry accommodation operations in BC outside of the sport fishing sector. Unaffiliated front-country accommodation facilities such as hotels and motels are rarely profitable without food and licensed beverage services, so backcountry cabins/lodges that are removed from convenient road access will be even more difficult to support.</td></tr>
</table>

Business Development	Cabins/lodges require a significant investment in "human capital" for hospitality services (i.e. food and lodging), interpretation and guiding. Lodges are becoming multi-activity and multi-season resort destinations for both guided and self-guided activities. By being multi-activity and multi-season, lodges are in a better position to manage their cash flow and staff. It will be important to find complementary activities to leverage staff and equipment across seasons. Partnering with guiding operations to offer tours where expertise does not exist in-house. Theming is on the rise. 36 percent of leisure travellers surveyed said they were looking for a lodge, resort or hotel with a distinctive theme. Although outdoor adventure could be considered a theme in and of itself, the increasing number of lodges will dilute this as a differentiating factor. Therefore, specialization will become more important for a lodge to succeed.
Key Success Factors	A remote, uncrowded, scenic location that has controlled access is preferred for accommodation development. Adding amenities that add to the enjoyment of the overall experience would improve marketability but this will be limited by the availability of capital. Providing gear, guides and interpretive services linked to multi-activity experiences. Ease of access to and from staging areas. Where the facility is geared toward trail-based activities like hiking, biking and nature observation there must be reasonable trails and access. Accommodation facilities which conform to sustainability principles. A first priority is facilities with minimum environmental impact. Buildings that demonstrate the use of recycled materials are becoming more common. The use of low quantities of water and electricity is desirable. Where possible, internal electrical generation, from water, wind and sun should take place.
Complementary Activities	Any number of theme focused retreats (health, food, hobbies, business workshops). Tie in with other activities in the area. Locally focused booking / central registry agency.

Huts				
Product Description	***Individual hut or hut system.***			
Markets	The market for the hut will depend on the activity being targeted and the degree of "rusticness" of the accommodation. Huts can range from the very comfortable to the very primitive. Generally, the soft adventure traveller will value a hut for its comfort, the access that it provides to more remote outdoor area and other amenities such as meals. The hard adventure traveller is likely an active enthusiast in the particular activity being performed, and appreciates the proximity and shelter from the elements in the high alpine or wilderness areas, making more challenging routes possible. Single hut users will select the hut based on its location vis-à-vis a particular destination (i.e. a climbing peak) or an area (i.e. backcountry bowl for skiing) that suits the level of challenge they are seeking. They will also look for the hut to have a variety of excursions from the hut. Hut-to-hut users will select a hut system based on the variety of features within the area covered throughout the system. They will rarely spend more than one or two nights at a single hut.			
Competition	Most of the existing huts and hut systems in Western Canada are targeted at backcountry skiers in the winter and hikers, backpackers and mountaineers in the summer. For both these activities the national park huts and others operated by the Alpine Club of Canada are major attractants. Many snowmobile and cross-country clubs maintain warming huts for local recreationists. Internationally, Colorado, Alaska and Europe have destination hut systems.			
Overall Potential	There is good potential for a hut system in the region because of the overall lack of tourism infrastructure and the possibility of linking up with the highway system for entry and exit points.			
Location Needs	Access to different activities from accommodation location. Access to high quality resources and features. Wilderness areas, parks, solitude, wildlife and wildlife viewing.			
Issues	Crown lease or licence of occupation if development is on public land.	Vandalism and unlicensed use.	Hut maintenance and upkeep.	Fee collection.
Infrastructure	Trails or trail systems. Signage. Reasonable road access to staging areas. Hospitality and transportation services near visitor centres and staging areas.			
Financial	Moderate capital costs – rustic huts can be constructed for as little as $20,000 and range upward depending on size and comfort level. Huts are rarely developed for exclusive private sector use because of difficulties associated with fee collection and unapproved use. The revenue potential is rarely high enough to justify an on-site attendant or manager so the ability to control use is limited.			

Business Development	Typically, huts on Crown land outside of parks have been erected by recreation clubs who have been licensed for such development by BCAL. There is no exclusivity of access to or within the huts in order to preserve the right of public access. Commercial use is considered unethical unless the operator reimburses for that use or otherwise contributes to maintenance and upkeep. There are few instances of hut development on Crown land by commercial operators because of problems associated with vandalism and unauthorized use by the public. As huts would be constructed on an existing trail, access would be available to all trail users. Even if a private operator constructed new trails for a hut or hut system, BCAL is likely to authorize such development through a Licence of Occupation, which would still allow public use of the trails and access to the hut (although the hut itself could be locked). This lack of exclusivity is likely to deter future commercial hut development. The funding of hut development is a major issue in BC, both for the initial capital investment and the ongoing operating costs. Most public or club huts have depended on donations and volunteers to build and operate. For privately-owned huts or refuges, such as those in France, many were previously farmhouses that were converted into huts, thereby reducing the initial capital cost. As well, these huts are in areas that already had well-developed and popular trail systems – in other words, demand preceded the fulfillment of the need. Huts can be developed to some extent through volunteer efforts and "sweat equity", but new facilities will have to demonstrate the ability to be somewhat self-sustaining. This will require careful demand assessment among targeted users. Where public huts are projected to operate on a deficit, the shortfall must be made up through other revenue sources, such as fundraising activities and membership dues. Any hut development must establish clear guidelines for acceptable use and activities and the extent to which they can be done in the area supported by the huts. They must follow practices that minimize the impact on the environment. A hut be developed either with minimal amenities that only need replenishment once in a while, or arrange for regular transport of supplies into the hut, either by motorized or non-motorized means. This will require careful planning to meet the expectations of users once they have been established while not compromising land health. Hut operators must establish a clear code of conduct and payment schedules. This information should be made available to users before they embark on their trip to the hut. In terms of enforcement, it may be necessary to employ hut wardens for the peak seasons, if not at all times the hut is open.
Key Success Factors	Clearly identifying purpose of the hut – is it for safety purposes, or for a comfortable stay in the mountains? Encouraging a sense of responsibility and peer pressure to keep the hut clean. Ensuring users understand the accommodation limits and space beforehand. Following sustainability principles Publishing exactly what is available at each hut how spots can be obtained as well as up-to-date information on availability. Making use of the Internet to accept and track bookings, which requires minimal staffing once system has been developed. Encouraging sharing of information amongst clubs, tour operators and other users.
Complementary Activities	Any remote or trail-based outdoor activity, especially hiking, backpacking, ski touring, snowmobiling and lakes/rivers tours. Locally focused booking / central registry agency.

10 Appendix 4 - Bibliography

Beeton, Sue. 1998. *Ecotourism A Practical Guide for Rural Communities*. Landlinks Press, Collingwood, Australia.

Coopers and Lybrand Consulting. April 1995. *Economic Benefits of BC Parks.* BC Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks.

DPA Group Inc. and MacLaren Plansearch Corp. March 1988. *Fishing Lodges and Resorts in BC Marketing and Development Initiatives*.

Fuller, A.M., and D.G. Reid. 1998. "Rural Tourism Planning: A Community Development Approach," in *Rural Rehabilitation: A Modern Perspective*. S.T. Smith (Ed.), Ahab Press, Whiteplains, New York.

Howe, Jim et al. 1997. *Balancing Nature and Commerce in Gateway Communities*. The Conservation Fund and the Sonoran Institute.

ISTC-Tourism. December 1990. *Fishing and Hunting Lodges/Resorts in Canada: A Position Paper*.

J Paul & Associates Inc. March 1999. *Projecting BC Recreation Use to the Year 2012.* Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks, Parks Division.

Johnston, Margaret E., Twyname, G. David and Haider, Wolfgang, eds. 1998. *Shaping Tomorrow's North: The Role of Tourism and Recreation*. Lakehead University Centre for Northern Studies.

Lindberg, Kreg and Hawkins, Donald E., eds. 1993. *Ecotourism: A Guide for Planners and Managers*. The Ecotourism Society.

Outdoor Recreation Council of America. 1997. *Human Powered Outdoor Recreation State of the Industry Report.*

Pam Wight and Associates. March 1999. *Catalogue of Exemplary Practices in Adventure Travel and Ecotourism.* Canadian Tourism Commission.

Province of B.C. Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks. April 1999. *Commercial Recreation on Crown Land Policy.*

The Economic Planning Group. March 1999. *On the Path to Success- Lessons from Canadian Adventure Travel and Ecotourism Operators.* Canadian Tourism Commission.

The Randolph Group. January 1997. *Adventure Travel and Ecotourism in Canada: Strategic Framework for Development*. Canadian Tourism Commission.

TREK International Inc. 2000. *COTA Membership Survey Results: Land Use Issues October/November 2000.* Council of Tourism Associations of BC.

Tourism British Columbia. 1999. *Tourism Product Guide*. Annual Visitor Information Counsellor Handbook.

Tourism British Columbia. 2000. *Accommodations*. Vancouver, BC: OP Publishing.

Tourism British Columbia. 1997 "The Report on Visitors to Northeast BC Region", *British Columbia Visitor Study: Report on Travel in British Columbia*.

Tourism Canada. February 1995. *Adventure Travel in Canada: An Overview of Product, Market and Business Potential*.

Tourism Research Group and DPA Group Inc. November 1989. *A Marketing and Development Plan for the Freshwater Fishing Resorts of BC*.